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No. 918
Friday
21 Feb. '97

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LUNATIC

The Eye says: If we are wrong, let him sue us.

Michael Howard

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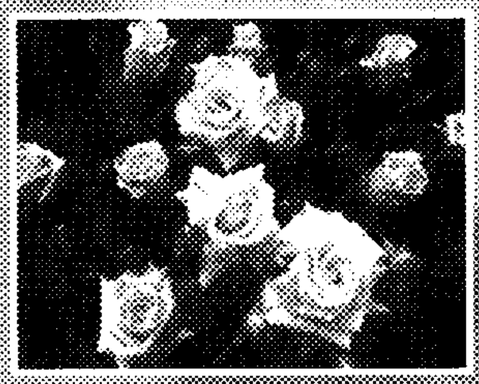
Mother's Day

March 9th

The Mother's Day gifts that go on giving....



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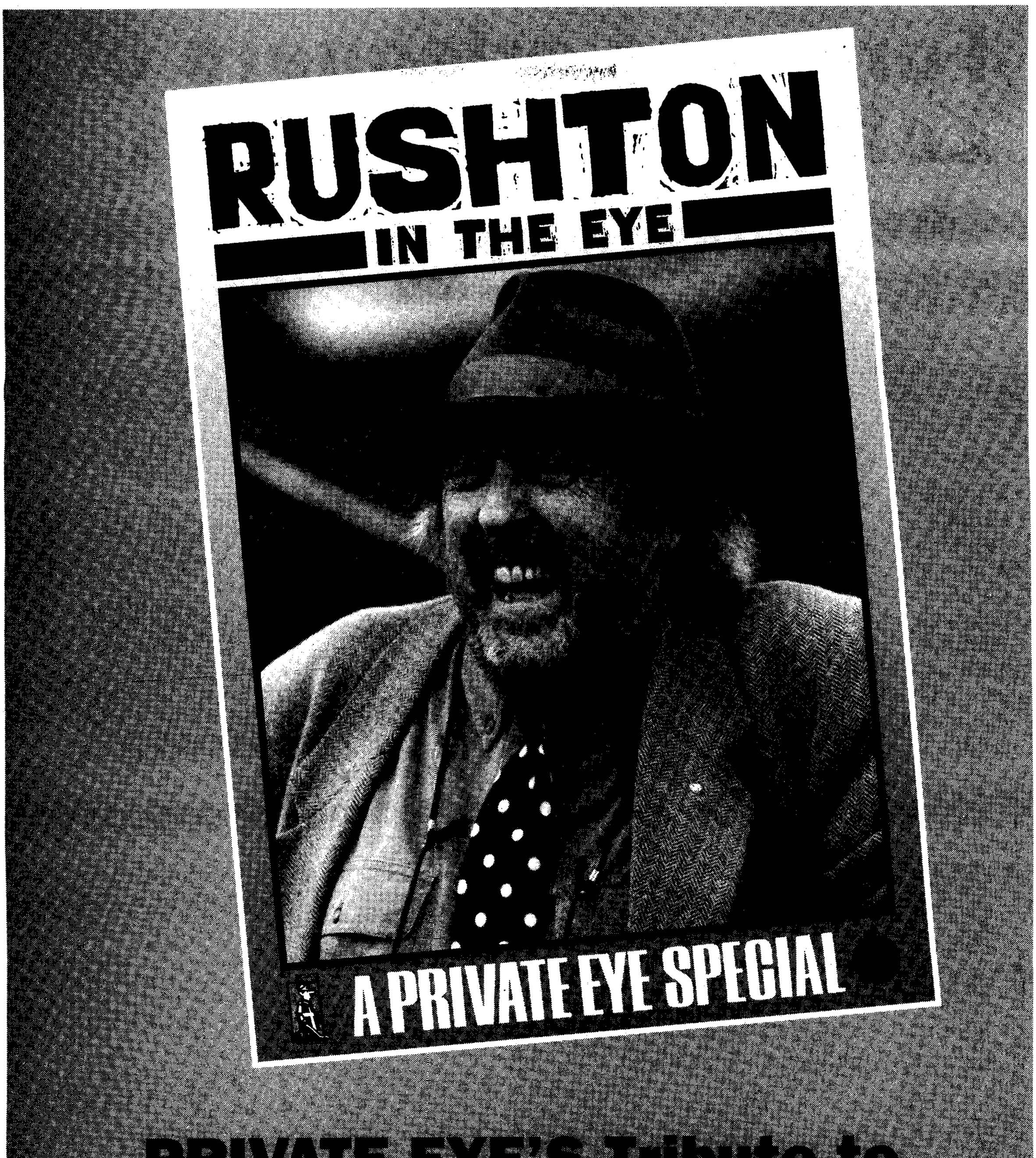

PRIVATE EYE'S Tribute to WILLIE RUSHTON

Richard Ingrams has introduced and edited this huge selection of Willie Rushton's cartoons, strips and illustrations produced for Private Eye over a period of 35 years.

This 40-page Eye 'Special' will be on sale from Thursday, 27 February, costing £1.50.

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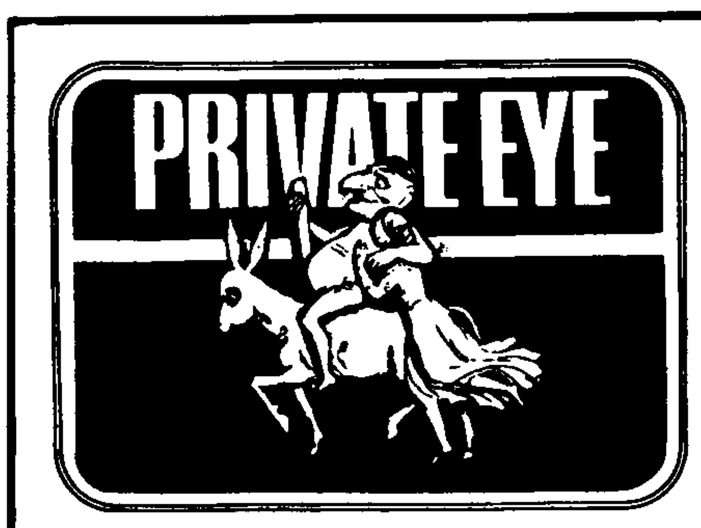

COLOUR SECTION

THE behaviour of Neil Hamilton, the Tory MP for Tatton, is becoming more and more eccentric.

A new political bookshop called Politicos, in Artillery Row, Westminster, invited all MPs to its opening party on 18 February. Most MPs replied, but Hamilton didn't.

Instead, his lawyers, Crockers, sent a motorbike with a letter warning the shop that if Hamilton "won" his case with the parliamentary commissioner on standards, he might sue any distributor of the recent paperback *Sleaze* by David Leigh and Ed Vulliamy, including Politicos. An astonished Ian Dale, the shop's proprietor, is courageously seeking an indemnity from the *Guardian*. "If I get it, I will certainly stock the book," he boasts to the *Eye*.

Hamilton is to give evidence to the commissioner, Sir Gordon Downey, on 20 February.

POOR Tim Smith, the Tory MP for Beaconsfield who resigned as a junior Northern Ireland minister after admitting taking cash for questions, has admitted in his evidence to Downey that he took rather more money from the lobbying firm Ian Greer Associates and from Fayed than he previously said.

Sir Gordon, who plans to rush his report out by the end of the month, may be very hard on him. In fact, the Beaconsfield Tories might have to look for a new candidate. How odd it would be if Downey were harder on the MP who admitted his payments than on the liar and cheat who denied them.

MEANWHILE another Tory MP has been rushing to his lawyers accusing the *Guardian* and other papers (though strangely not the *Times* which carried the same story) of publishing "malicious briefings".

Richard Ryder, John Major's former chief whip, was incensed when several papers named him as a likely casualty of the first Downey report — on the nobbling of the privileges committee by the Tory whips. When the report came out and did not name Ryder, Ryder discharged a volley of complaints claiming that his name had been cleared. He seems not to have understood the significance of the reference in the report to the "former chief whip" who, together with his assistant (Greg Knight MP), put down a Commons motion nominating their fellow whip Andrew Mitchell as a member of the committee.

Sir Gordon Downey disapproves of the idea that whips of any party should conspire to nominate one of their own to the privileges committee, and he says so. The implied criticism of Ryder is obvious. But why is he getting so upset, and who does he think is responsible for the aforesaid "malicious briefings"? Not top members of his own party, surely.

WHILE parliament and press concentrate on Douglas Hogg the agriculture expert, it would be a pity to forget about Douglas Hogg the arms salesman — as highlighted by letters between Hogg and one of his more influential constituents in 1987.

The constituent was Major General Donald Isles, who wrote to his MP in a sustained effort to break the British government arms embargo on both sides of the cold war in Cyprus. Isles was deputy managing director of BMARC, an arms company in Grantham, Lincs, and he wanted to sell Oerlikon anti-aircraft guns to the Greek Cypriots.

Isles begged his MP, Hogg, to go and lobby the relevant ministers at the foreign office and the ministry of defence. His letter to Hogg's stately home in Lincolnshire of 24 July 1987 was not referred to in the Scott report, which is a pity: it gives a flavour of the atmosphere in arms companies at the time.

"I know what goes on worldwide legally and illegally, overtly and covertly and I have my important links," wrote the general, which was modest of him because, as Hogg well knew, Isles had been director of weapons at the MoD. He went on: "I also know what HMG gets up to and has got up to — BLOWPIPE FOR AFGHANISTAN is a typical example (and I do not at all blame HMG). I have served in Cyprus and I know well all the politics."

Mr Hogg was at that time a member of HMG — minister of state at the home office. But instead of telling the general that HMG did not "get up to" things, and that the policy of his government on arms to Cyprus was firm and even principled, Hogg visited his fellow ministers and lobbied hard for the guns contract. In a grovelling "Dear Donald" letter on 27 July 1987, he said he'd discussed the matter with foreign office minister Lynda Chalker, and there was "no prospect of persuading her to change her mind". Pushed by Isles, Hogg tried again at another meeting and was again rebuffed.

GEOFFREY PATTIE, the MP at the centre of allegations about the Tory party's contacts with the gangster regime in Albania, has led a charmed life ever since, as a new MP, he campaigned vigorously for Margaret Thatcher to be leader of the Tory party.

In 1974, the year he was elected for a safe seat in Surrey, Pattie's advertising agency, Collett Dickenson and Pearce, engaged in some enterprising swindling of the Inland Revenue. Pattie was a director at the time; but when, years later, the chairman and a number of directors came to be prosecuted for conspiracy to commit the swindle, he was not among them.

In November 1980 the firm pleaded guilty to swindling the IR out of a quarter of a million pounds and was fined £115,000. Asked about his escape from the clutches of the law, Pattie explained: "All the things unfortunately in this business were to do with the way the company was run. All these matters were management matters, you see. They weren't the sort of matters which, as it were, sleeping directors would be consulted about or even told about" (*Daily Mirror*, 26 November 1980).

Pattie was RAF minister at the time. He went on being a minister until 1987. Then he became a vice-chairman of the Tory party and chairman of GEC-Marconi.

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"I'm glad to see they've tagged Goldilocks' parents"

Street of Shame

100 Years Ago

"Strange tales are told about Mrs Thatcher's favourite advertising man Tim Bell, former wizard of Saatchi & Saatchi. Whilst dining recently with some advertising colleagues Bell told Chris Williams, creative director of Young and Rubicam, that he was altogether too common. 'It's all right for you,' Williams replied. 'You were born with a silver spoon up your nose'."

— *Private Eye*, 5 April 1985.

"What news of Tinkerbell, or Tim Bell, the Prime Minister's favourite ad-man, mysteriously known as 'The Nose'?"

— *Private Eye*, 21 February 1986.

"Chris Hutchins, the indefatigable gossip columnist and cocaine correspondent of the *Today* newspaper, is preparing a major *exposé* of the private habits of Tim Bell, Mrs Thatcher's favourite adman... Hutchins, who recently attended a private clinic where he was treated for nasal irritation, claims to have picked up Bell's scent."

— *Private Eye*, 25 November 1988.

"Good to see that the Political Honours Scrutiny Committee saw no reason and was given none to object to the Thatcher... knighthood for 'Sir' Tim Bell... There has quite properly been no regard given to that unfortunate incident in Hampstead so many years ago or his expensive habits of the past."

— *Private Eye*, 4 January 1991.

"A Convicted Flasher and Former Cocaine Abuser. EXCLUSIVE: Sir Tim Bell, the Conservatives' advertising guru, becomes its latest PR problem."

— *Observer*, 16 February 1997.

MARK Hollingsworth's book about Sir Tim Bell produced a strong scoop for the *Observer* on 16 February — a scoop which a few weeks previously was destined for the *Sunday Times*.

The *Sunday Times*'s serial department contacted Hollingsworth last July and begged him not to sell serial rights to any other newspaper. It showed more than usual interest in the book, and when it saw the manuscript in October became keener than ever. Meetings were held with editor John Witherow and a contract was about to be signed when suddenly in December without explanation the *Sunday Times* withdrew.

FACT TO REMEMBER: Sir Tim Bell has been on the Murdoch payroll for as along as anyone can remember. His current firm, Lowe Bell, acts for the *Sunday Times*, BSkyB, HarperCollins and anywhere else in the Murdoch empire where the PR influence of the great Bell can be of service.

Interestingly, David Frost's early morning BBC show on the day of the *Observer* scoop — complete with its review of the papers — was also strangely silent on the subject. The front pages of most of the other Sundays were shown on screen as usual — but the *Observer* front page was not.

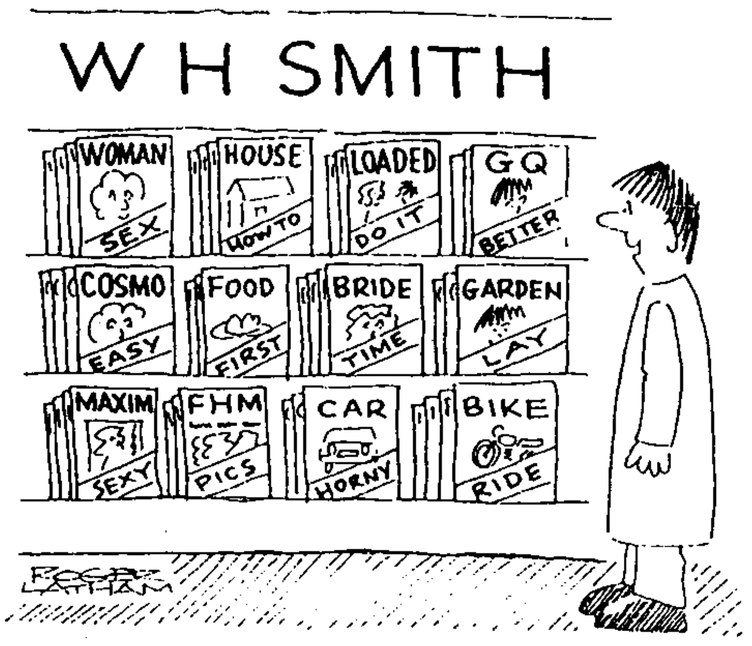
FACT TO REMEMBER: Sir David Frost is godfather to Sir Tim's son Harry, eight.

On the day after the *Observer* scoop, the *Guardian* carried a strong attack on it from Lord Tebbit, who denounced the Hollingsworth book as a "new" Labour dirty trick.

FACT TO REMEMBER: One of Hollingsworth's most important sources for the book was, er, Lord Tebbit, who enthusiastically agreed to an interview in which he spilled out lots of stories about Bell. Tebbit believed that Bell was in league with Lord Young and Lady Thatcher in the faction fight which split the Tory leadership during the 1987 general election campaign.

THE *Daily Mail* seems certain that the five young men it named on its front page last week were guilty of the Stephen Lawrence murder. But a series of puzzling questions still leaves a glaring gap in its coverage.

If the case against these men is so clear, why wasn't it brought to the courts? Why was the case against two of the young men, who were originally charged with murder, dropped on 29 July 1993, a few days before the men were to be committed for trial? Was there some change in the credibility of the evidence against these men, and if so, what was it? What was the role of the police in all this? These are the crucial questions for the *Daily Mail* investigators in the coming weeks.



"Who needs the 'top shelf' anyway?"

BOYISH *Grauniad* editor Alan Rusbridger has become obsessed with appealing to the "yoof" market, especially since his alarming discovery that the average age of his readers has recently risen from 42 to 43.

In the *Grauniad* computer last week, hacks discovered what they took to be a satire on Rusbridger's yoof-mania — a long story about the non-wedding of Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit, apparently destined for the front page, and written "by our showbusiness correspondent". The *Guardian* does not, of course, employ such a person.

Imagine their surprise when the story turned out to be genuine after all — splashed all over the next day's front page. So who is the mysterious "showbusiness correspondent" responsible for this drivel? Step forward... Alan Rusbridger.

IN a splendid piece of campaigning journalism, *Times* hack Jason Nisse warned last week that "impending changes to the tax rules could leave many journalists facing painful bills".

He listed some of the normal activities at risk from the Inland Revenue's new self-assessment inquisition: "The trip to the Bahamas to test-drive the new Ford... the week in Hong Kong to acclimatise the writer to the business environment for a unit trust... the weekend in the country-house hotel..."

Sickeningly, the IR now wishes to see details of these routine assignments and may well insist on taxing them. As Nisse mournfully concluded: "The freebie is part of journalistic folklore... but it is under threat from the taxman."

He should know. As City correspondent for the *Independent* during the reign of St Andreas, Jason Nisse innocently accepted the hospitality of one Asil Nadir, then chairman of Polly Peck. This included a fact-finding sojourn at one of Nadir's sun-drenched hotels in Northern Cyprus. Alas, Nisse's pedantic editor felt that this jolly jaunt might compromise the paper's much-vaunted independence: the hard-working hack was stripped of his title and demoted to a less glamorous job. He left the paper shortly afterwards.

DAILY MEL-O-GRAPH

WITH his party trailing in the polls, his candidate facing humiliation in the Wirral South by-election, and his ministers at loggerheads over Europe, the Prime Minister could be forgiven for feeling dejected. But he should take heart from an unlikely source — the return to favour of the Page Three girl in the shapely form of Melinda Messenger.

Like canaries down the mine, Page Three girls have given the toilers of the political coalface early warning of the rise of pro-Conservative sentiment. The popularity of these well-endowed young women mirrored the rise of Margaret Thatcher... etc.

— Third leader, The Daily Trying-to-be-with-it-o-graph.

HELL hath no fury like a London *Evening Standard* hackette scorned — especially when the hackette in question is buxom, forthright Julia Hartley-Brewer.

Hartley-Brewer has something of a crush on her dishy colleague Gervase Webb; but he, alas, does not return the compliment. Drinking in a wine-bar near the *Standard* recently, she overheard him holding forth on how happy he was with his wife — whereupon she leapt at him, scratching his face, throwing his spectacles to the floor and then stamping on them.

The cost of replacing the glasses, which were uninsured, is £150, but la Brewer is flatly refusing to pay. Meanwhile, the hapless Webb still bears the scars of her fearsome fingernails — and still has to face her across the newsroom every day.

GORDON BROWN has invaded Robin Cook's "constituency" of *Tribune* magazine in the opening blows of the battle for the succession: he has accepted the role of president of the mag's event committee for the 60th anniversary of its founding.

Cook, normally regarded as the *Tribune* candidate for leader once the party has got rid of Tony Blair, has had to make do with the horrific role of president of the ticket committee, which should not prove too demanding.

The celebration dinner, at £50 a head, is being organised by Hobsbawm Macaulay Communications — "Macaulay" being Sarah, the woman whose name has been linked, rightly or wrongly, to Brown's. In a touching gesture, she has sited the party in Covent Garden — at Brown's restaurant.

RUBBISH STORY

THE environment department is considering plans for a giant waste dump at Magheramorne outside Belfast while Mr Tim Walker, an employee of the dump company Haul Waste, works for the department on contract.

Locals, who say the dump is too close to Larne Lough, a site of special scientific interest, know all about the cosy relationship between the DoE and Haul Waste — not least after an investment conference in America was told about the Magheramorne landfill plan and the "key contact" for the project was listed as someone at the DoE — a foolish printing error, it was later explained.

Then there was the public inquiry at which the counsel for Larne council complained of an "apparent cosiness" between the planning applicant and the DoE. Finally, when campaigners asked the DoE for information on tidal influences in Larne Lough they were told to go to Kirk-McClure-Morton, which had done an environmental assessment study which the DoE was using. KMM coincidentally also represented the DoE at the inquiry.

IN THE TEAROOM

JOHN MAJOR has announced his A-Team to help him win the general election and, as expected, bungling Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative party chairman, has been left out.

Instead, the big decisions will be made by Maurice Saatchi and Viscount Cranborne, with young Danny Finkelstein tagging along in case any awkward policy questions come up. This doesn't bode well for the Conservatives.

Saatchi is an increasingly laughable hyena from the advertising jungle whose main contribution to date has been to erect posters of a lion all over the country along with a message saying everyone should be shit-scared of "new" Labour.

Unfortunately it hasn't worked as the supposedly feral feline modelling for the shot dozed off. Since Sir Tinker Bell is now out of the loop, no one could be found equipped to administer the required spoonful of Columbian nose candy to make the sleepy animal roar. The message conveyed is not, therefore, that Tony Blair is red in tooth and claw, but that he's rather an amiable pussycat. The poster has had its biggest impact, Tory central office research reveals, on small children who want to tickle the beast under the chin.

Lord Cranborne is a scion of the Cecil dynasty, which has run the Establishment's dirty tricks department since Elizabethan times. Since providing house room for the Major team's battle against John Redwood, he's become the prime minister's new best friend. As the heir of the Marquess of Salisbury, he lacks enough of the common touch to go out knocking on doors; so his work will take place behind the arras where he will be checking that senior Tories aren't simply using the campaign as a beauty contest to advance their own leadership bids.

Finkelstein is a clever, ambitious apostate Owenite who's deserted the social market for the... er... job market. He is responsible for the "fear is the key" concept that underpins all the Saatchi advertising. The now thoroughly discredited "Demon Eyes" campaign is known among central office insiders as "Frankelstein's Monster". Anxious Tories whose seats may depend upon these buffoons will be visiting Number Ten this week to plead with John Major to appoint someone with more "bottom".

'Urquhart'

RELATIONS continue to sour between brooding shadow chancellor Gordon Brown and the "spin doctor" formerly known as Peter Mandelson.

Alarm bells rang when Labour MPs who organise office allocation learnt that Mandy was eyeing up vacant space adjacent to Brown's St Stephen's eyrie. Quick to come to the shadow chancellor's aid, an urgent missive was sent immediately to Brown's shadow cabinet pals, urging them to "get someone in there quick" before Mandy had a chance of putting in one of his narks.

Brown, however, will not be able to avoid being thrown together with Mandy in his Millbank fastness for the duration of the election campaign, and turbulent times are expected. The man, incidentally, who would be Labour's lord chancellor, Derry Irvine, has been busy telling anyone who will listen of his "worries" about Gordon and how he may turn out to be something of a "problem".

MEANWHILE a vicious succession battle is being fought over old Labour turf in South Yorkshire. The vacancy in the former mining seat of Don Valley has seen battle joined by old Labourite Doncaster councillors Peter Welsh and Tony Sellers, and the distinctly Blairey Yvette Cooper, a former adviser to Harriet Harman.

Luckily for Cooper, the *Independent* has taken an uncharacteristic interest in the murky world of Labour politics and the Doncaster area in particular, running a series of high profile pieces on alleged junketing among a shadowy group of Doncaster councillors, calling themselves the "Mining Community Group", prominent among their number, according to the *Indie*, are Don Valley front runners, Councillors Welsh and Sellers.

The *Indie*'s revelations came days before a meeting of a special NEC panel drawn up to decide the selection shortlist. But what the *Indie* strangely neglected to mention was that the individual most likely to benefit from its revelations — Yvette Cooper — is coincidentally a leader writer for the paper.

GROANS reverberated round Westminster last week when Phillip Oppenheim, exchequer secretary to the treasury, announced "what I believe to be a good outcome for all parties". He was referring to the privatisation of the Paymaster Agency, sold for £22.7m, a modest but welcome addition to treasury funds.

And who was the lucky recipient of the agency which provides pensions and banking services to the public sector? Why, a joint venture between Hogg Robinson and, wait for it, EDS, the giant US computer firm (see *Eyes passim*) best known as computer contractor to the Child Support Agency with its long history of wrong assessments and mismanagement.

More recently EDS has taken on the contract with the Inland Revenue to introduce self assessment for taxpayers, which is currently running just £263m over budget.

TORY HOPEFULS

NO. 1: As usual Scottish Tories have had to import parliamentary candidates from south of the border to make up the numbers for the election. One of these English troopers is the Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg, son of Mystic Mogg, the former *Times* editor.

His campaign may not meet with much success with the voters of Central Fife, however. For as Mogg Jnr told a Scottish paper: "Nanny will come up to campaign for me and look after me. I couldn't survive without her. She has been in the family for 30 years." His campaigning issues may also miss the mark: "I'll be explaining to voters why keeping hereditary peers in the House of Lords is of vital importance."

Jacob may be hard pressed to find many lords or nannies in Central Fife. At the last election Labour took the seat with a majority of 10,500 over the SNP. The Tories were 3,000 votes behind that.

No. 2: Another Tory lamb to the Scottish slaughter is David Campbell-Bannerman, a former councillor in Tunbridge Wells who is standing in Rutherglen. He has outlined his campaign strategy thus: "Kenny Dalglish is from Rutherglen. I am inviting him to join my campaign, but I don't know if he's a Tory." A quick check with Kenny's autobiography would have told David that Kenny doesn't care much for politics. The only time he ever voted was for the SNP.

No. 3: In Angus the Tories are distributing a newspaper which trumpets: "SNP Figures Don't Add Up." But local Tory candidate Sebastian Arbuthnot-Leslie — standing as Sebastian Leslie to avoid putting off the Scots with his double-barrelled name — knows all about figures not adding up. In 1995 three of his firms were dissolved and four more suffered losses totalling almost £150,000.

> The spread of lawless, inner-city ghettos would be threatened by the re-election of the Tories for a fifth term, shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown will warn today.
>
> ***Independent***

A HOME office press release announces the appointment of Ms Josephine Dobry as a new member of the Police Complaints Authority (PCA).

It discloses that "she worked as a press officer for the Consumers Association between 1977 and 1980 before joining BBC local radio as a reporter and producer"; and she later became a "freelance reporter for Radio 4".

Modestly, the press release makes no reference to Ms Dobry's father, who was a judge; or to her husband, Julian Le Vay, a senior official in the prison service.

GLAMOROUS Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, has been growing cavalier in his treatment of parliament.

Determined to rumble Woodhead's wild statistics about incompetent teachers, the Liberal education spokesman Don Foster put down a question to education secretary Gillian Shephard asking for the figures of grades achieved by teachers in Ofsted inspections, and an estimate of how many teachers were below standard.

Shephard referred the question to Woodhead who wrote to Foster on 30 January with the grading figures. He added: "As our database cannot (by design) identify individual teachers and the associated observation data, it is not possible for Ofsted to convert the proportion of lessons of any grade into a number of teachers."

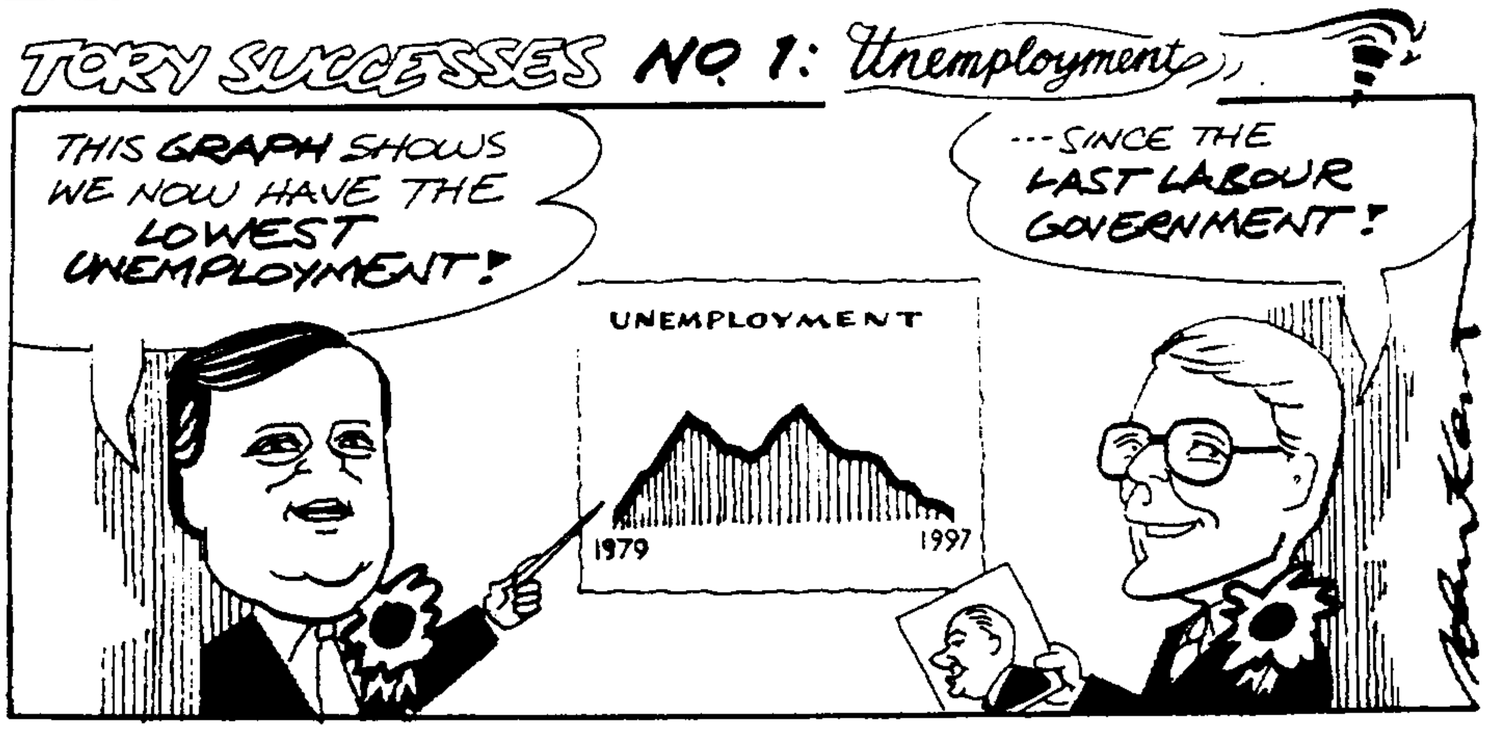
This letter was placed in the House of Commons library. Whoops! Three days later Woodhead gave a press conference in which he did indeed convert his grades into a number of incompetent teachers: 13,000 was his figure.

BIRDS banished from Cardiff Bay by the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation's plans will supposedly find homes on 1,000 acres around Newport.

The Land Authority is currently trying to buy up the land as a feeding ground for these thousands of birds, but how they will be lured to it is as unclear as the muddy Cardiff waterfront. What is clear is that if the birds fly elsewhere, the Land Authority will have its hands on a site worth millions in housing terms — many times its value as agricultural land, currently put at around £5m. This value is massively boosted by the £1.7bn factory development by the Korean conglomerate LG which is going ahead nearby.

The authority and the development corporation have much in common — not least Sir Geoffrey Inkin who chairs both quangos raking in £70,000 a year. A failed Tory candidate — he tried his luck at Ebbw Vale in 1979 — he is a mate of Lord Crickhowell, a director of Associated British Ports whose property arm Grosvenor Waterside is deeply interested in building houses.

'Backbiter'



HALLO! THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! POOR Imran Khan! His mission to bring truth and justice to Pakistan has been dashed by an ungrateful electorate.

Imran and his lovely wife Jemima were not helped in the election campaign by the Pakistani press's detailed accounts of Sita White's claims that she had borne Imran a love child, Tyrian, in 1992.

Sita told the Islamabad paper *The News* **that when she visited Imran and his family in Pakistan, the dashing former cricket star was concerned that she should observe all the Islamic proprieties: "He was very formal about it. 'You have to sleep in this room; I have to sleep in this room. Don't come and see me in my room.' No affection was to be shown in public... He was very respectful towards his standards, I suppose."**

What, no bonking? The interviewer asked: "You did have separate rooms but I am sure, once in a while, you did get together?"

Sita's answer, as reported by *The News*, **referred to a bizarre practice which the Marquesa cannot find in her copy of the Koran. "Yes," said Sita. "We carpet crapped, as we called it."**

HALLO! *I HEAR that film buffs are besieging video stores to order advance copies of Russ Meyer's Slaves (aka Blacksnake), starring Anouska Hempel (aka Lady Weinberg) which is due for re-release later this year (see Eye 917).*

Lady Weinberg is anxious I should make clear that Meyer's cheesy 1973 movie, which enjoyed a modest success at the Centa Cinema, Piccadilly Circus, in tandem with the classic The 18-year-old Schoolgirls, is not just a load of old porn. It is in fact an important politico-historical exposé of the injustices of plantation society with a strong moral message. Although it dwells with what some might consider relish on scenes of M'lady whipping her unfortunate black charges, the moral message is driven home at the end of the film when the slaves rise up and put their tormentors, including Lady Weinberg, to a gory death.

HALLO! THE curse of the Marquesa has fallen on Professor Richard Whitfield, warden of the "think tank" founded by Prince Philip, St George's House, Windsor (*Eyes passim*).

The very day that this organ last hit the streets, 7 February, detailing Whitfield's latest outburst of megalomania, St George's announced that he had asked to be released from his five-year contract a year early.

Before Christmas Whitfield called in terrified staff one by one and threatened anyone who leaked reports of his behaviour to the *Eye* with instant dismissal. Now it is he who is departing. So farewell, then.

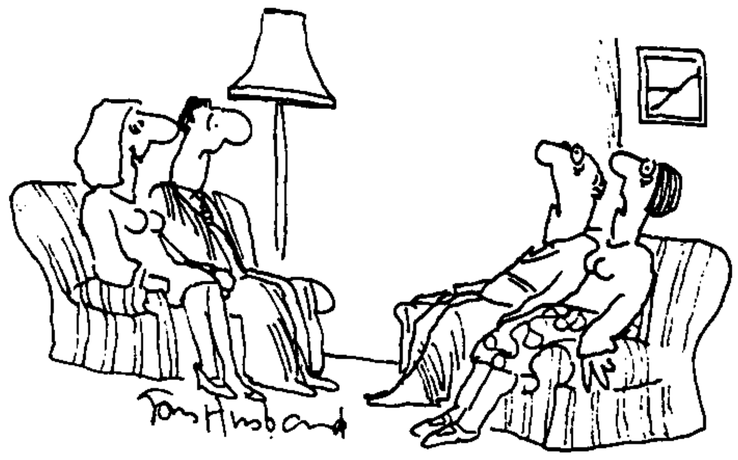
As soon as the announcement was made St George's staff celebrated with a party, such was their distress at seeing the back of their boss.

HALLO! *WHY did I find the performance of Jonathan Pryce as Peron in Evita so creepy? The question has been worrying me for weeks but at last one of my luvvie friends has solved the mystery. Pryce based his characterisation on the most sinister living model he could find — none other than Peter "Mandy" Mandelson!*

HALLO! I SHALL be glued to the screen this Wednesday evening for swoony Chris Morris's show *Brass Eye*.

Naughty Chris has played a bit of a jape on that rather serious young man Peter Tatchell, of the pressure group Outrage! Tatchell was lured to a studio for what he thought was a serious discussion on the tactics of "outing" gay politicians, but found himself subject to a spoof interrogation from Morris about what his tactics might be in the purely hypothetical case of "outing" a cabinet minister in the run-up to a general election.

I am afraid that viewers hoping to hear the hypothetical names of any cabinet ministers will be disappointed since Channel 4 has meanly put bleeps over the relevant words. There is however no censorship of poor Tatchell making an idiot of himself as the interview goes on.



"That's good – Mummy and Daddy don't seem to be objecting to our relationship anymore"

HALLO! SYMPATHY to Amanda, Lady Harlech, muse to Karl Lagerfeld, who flits between Paris, London and Shropshire while caring for three homes, three horses, two children, one husband (Francis, Lord Harlech) and 25 households of assorted peasants.

Amanda and Francis can't afford to live in the main ancestral home, Brogyntyn Hall, near Oswestry; so they rough it in a farmhouse called The Mount and use another ancestral pile, Glyn Cywarch, in north Wales, for entertaining.

Pretty tiresome, you'll agree: but to make matters worse tenants on the estate have been whingeing for years now that their water, which comes untreated from a Brogyntyn reservoir, is unfit to drink. A report to the local council concurs: tests have found it to be a definite health risk.

Lord H., busy man that he is, still hasn't found time to carry out remedial works; and last week's public inquiry had to be cancelled because he claimed the dolts on the council had failed to tell him the date. The dolts, however, are in revolt and are now whining to environment secretary John Gummer. Why they can't drink Evian like everyone else these days is a mystery.

HALLO! HARRODS owner Mohamed Fayed — or "Mo-Fo" as he is known to streetwise staff — should rein in his goons.

The other day he and his entourage were touring the shop when they bumped into a customer — the chief executive of a quoted property company — who was meeting his pregnant wife and mother-in-law in ladies' separates.

Mo-Fo's bodyguards gave directions but were put out moments later when the man turned a corner and again, accidentally, almost walked in to the great man. "Can I escort you out of the store, sir?" said one of the heavies, before unceremoniously ejecting the shopper.

"I didn't speak to Fayed; I didn't touch him; I was no threat to him," said the man. "I was smartly dressed, I was in Harrods to spend money. What more do they want?"

Perhaps the home office is right not to give Mo-Fo a passport.

'The Marquesa'

THE COOK, THE RAPIST, THE CHIP-SHOP OWNER AND THE JUDGE

WHEN "socialist millionaire" Owen Oyston began his prison sentence for rape last year, it was widely predicted that he would have a wretched time inside — despatched to a jail many miles away, deprived of his usual material comforts, constantly under threat from fellow inmates whose hatred of sex offenders is even greater than their loathing of flashy tycoons.

Not so. Oyston is having a high old time in Wymott jail, Lancashire, a mere eight miles from his head office. Prison officers and fellow-prisoners all treat him with great respect. He has become the prison table-tennis champion (for which the prize is a phonecard, very useful for a busy businessman); and he has been appointed trainer of the F-wing football team, using all the skills acquired during his chairmanship of Blackpool FC.

He is also a regular attender at the prison chapel. During one recent service, the vicar asked if anyone in the congregation had any extra prayers. "Yes indeed," Oyston yelled. "I'd like to pray for Michael Howard to see sense." He was loudly applauded.

Meanwhile, in his spare moments, Oyston is catching up on one of his favourite pastimes — litigation. In the high court last week he brought yet another case against Michael Murrin, the former fish-and-chip shop owner and private detective who has been pursuing a vendetta against Oyston for many years, with the encouragement of several prominent Tories (see *Eyes passim.*)

On a previous visit to the high court, back in 1989, Murrin was ordered by Mr Justice Michael Davies not to repeat any of the defamatory allegations about Oyston in a dossier he had been circulating — "or similar libels". At last week's hearing, Oyston's lawyer claimed that Murrin had since broken the order by faxing libellous comments about Oyston to two journalists in Lancashire, Andrew Rosthorn and David Graham.

Murrin flatly denied sending the documents, insisting that the faxes must be "forgeries". Rather perversely, however, he boasted to the court that "I have been in breach of the injunction on a number of occasions". As the judge, Mr Justice Wright, observed: "I must confess I am puzzled." (Or, in the words of one lawyer: "It's just another day in Oystonia".) The atmosphere became even more surreal when the judge asked Oyston's counsel, David Price, if he wished to take instructions. With his client hundreds of miles away in a prison cell, Price confessed that "er, it's a bit difficult for me to take instructions".

After listening to Murrin's ravings for some time, the judge concluded that the defendant "is obsessed with Owen Oyston" and that his breaches of the injunction were undoubtedly a contempt of court. He also found that Murrin had repeatedly lied on oath. But instead of imprisoning him, he accepted a promise from Murrin that he would never again libel Oyston.

"Do not think that the undertaking you have given is a light or trivial matter," Mr Justice Wright warned. "If you do this again there is no doubt you will go to prison. Do you understand? Do you *really* understand?"

We shall see.

MEANWHILE, with impeccable timing, Murrin has received a glowing testimonial from senior executives of the NatWest bank, in reply to a complaint from the Lancashire newsagent Doreen Cook.

As we reported last November (*Eye* 910), Mrs Cook's business had been badly hit by prolonged roadworks outside the shop, and so her bank manager at the NatWest recommended her to use the services of a "company doctor" — who turned out to be Michael Murrin. His professional advice was, to say the least eccentric: at one point, after insisting on "total control" of her chequebooks, he snatched a crucifix from her wall and flung it at her, shouting "if you believe this bloody nonsense, you'd better start praying. You're going to need it!"

On learning that she had been a Community Health Council member, he denounced her as a

"bloody Tory who is to blame for the state of this country", and warned her that the last person to fall foul of him — Owen Oyston — had ended up behind bars.

Understandably enough, Mrs Cook protested to the NatWest head office in London, and to her MP, Robert Atkins (whose own dealings with Murrin have been chronicled in the *Eye*). On 3 February, Atkins sent her a reassuring letter: "In the course of my conversation on your behalf with Mr Tony Warren of NatWest Bank, he gave me to understand that the bank was satisfied that Michael Murrin's qualifications to assist you upon their recommendation were satisfactory and that they had no reason to doubt his bona fides."

Whoops! Just over a week later, a high court judge condemned Murrin as an incorrigible liar.

ANOTHER COOK, ANOTHER RAPIST...

UNTIL two weeks ago everything was going swimmingly for Triplex Lloyd, the West *Midlands* castings firm which had mounted a hostile £57.7 million takeover bid for William Cook plc. There had been a non-stop barrage of damaging publicity about Cook's chairman, the flamboyant barrister Andrew Cook, while no word of criticism had been published of Triplex Lloyd.

But then the last issue of the *Eye* appeared, drawing attention to a few skeletons in Triplex Lloyd's own cupboard — including a £100,000 fine for reckless negligence to the safety of its workers, and the company's unexplained employment of convicted rapist and ex-cop Peter Martin, an old friend of Owen Oyston.

Apres ca, le deluge. On the day the *Eye* hit the news-stands in central London, the Takeover Panel issued an almost unprecedented rebuke to Triplex Lloyd for its "reprehensible" leaking of information — which had been obtained under Takeover Panel rules of confidentiality — to the *Financial Times* and the *Guardian*. One day later, without warning, Triplex Lloyd threw in the towel.

Robin Richmond, company secretary at Triplex, admitted last week that the *Eye* piece "wasn't particularly helpful". But he confirmed our allegation that Peter Martin, now serving a 20-year sentence for rape and indecent assault, had indeed worked for the company.

Martin was recruited in 1993 by the group finance director, John Foley, whose duties included the management of litigation. "I believe John did engage Peter Martin on a consultancy basis. As I understand it, it was with regard to one particular piece of litigation against Triplex which is still on-going." The firm's directors, who knew of the appointment, were "absolutely shocked" when they later read about Martin's seedy activities at the model agency he ran in Manchester, where he raped no fewer than six young women.

Richmond declined to say how much Martin had earned. But the *Eye* has learned of a curious meeting last summer at the Swallow Hotel, Birmingham, at which Triplex chairman Colin Cooke discussed John Foley and Peter Martin with a private investigator and a businessman. In the course of their chat, Cooke allegedly admitted that Martin had been paid an astonishing £110,000 "consultancy fee" in just over a year.

Cooke himself was not available last week to confirm the story. "Unfortunately — or fortunately for him — he's away on holiday," Richmond explained.

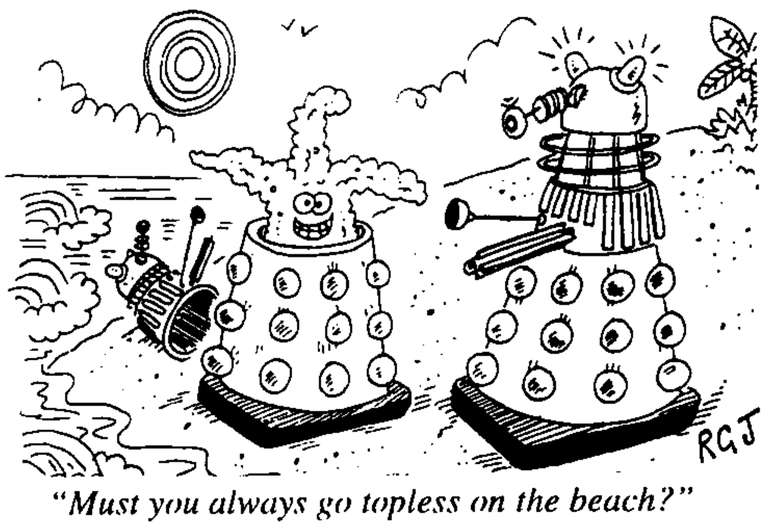
Martin's contract came to an end when John Foley left Triplex Lloyd in September 1994. Since then, by an amazing coincidence, Foley has resurfaced as the chairman of Bay Radio in Lancashire — in which the biggest shareholder is none other than Owen Oyston, Peter Martin's old chum and fellow-jailbird. Foley told the *Eye* that, although he now felt "massive embarrassment" at his connections with Peter Martin, his feelings towards Owen Oyston are much friendlier. "When I left Triplex in September 1994 I was scratching around for work. I was very happy to get involved in Bay Radio. It paid the bills."

NOOKS and CORNERS

MY PICTURE shows Crawford Priory near Cupar, in Fife, a once magnificent Regency Gothic pile by David Hamilton and James Gillespie Graham. Well, now it is a ruin, and its owners, Crawford Priory Ltd, aka Lord Cochrane, 4th Baron of Cults, has applied for listed building consent to demolish what is left of this remarkable listed building.

Poor Lord Cochrane, Eton & Lloyd's, had an unhappy childhood at Crawford Priory so, since he inherited in 1968, he has behaved with conspicuous maturity and taken it out on an innocent building. Having declined to live in the house, as a good Conservative he adopted the traditional policy of abandoning it to the elements. In the early 1980s, most of the fine internal plasterwork, together with the chimneypieces, was intact; today they are gone. And now, surprise, surprise, he claims that the building is dangerous and beyond repair — putting the lives of children at risk, indeed — and who could possibly disagree with that?

Our Baron of Cults is quite shameless: Historic Scotland is now accused of "inaction", and its attempt with the Scottish Civic Trust to save the ruins, "ill-advised and too late". Well, never mind the truth: which is that the Scottish Civic Trust has put Crawford Priory in its "Buildings at Risk" register for years, and would love to present the house in a positive way — after all, several potential buyers have come forward. But the sad fact is that My Lord Cochrane had no interest in selling and no desire to find any alternative to demolition. *'Piloti'*



"Must you always go topless on the beach?"

Forty-one years ago, I was just passing my time by happily paddling around in this beautiful aqua blue sea. Sometimes I'd be sure I was waterskiing behind a glorious white horse, sometimes singing at the top of my voice a song about what a difference a day makes. But mostly just splashing around and laughing.

Then one day, all of a sudden, everything went dark. Something scary rose up from the bottom of the sea and grabbed me by my ankles. I fought against it for hours but couldn't help myself. I wanted to stay in the ocean but was gradually dragged down into this tight, dark tunnel.

The next thing I knew, I felt this big slap on my behind, which outraged me, and I hollered out as loud as I could. I wasn't scared any more, but did not appreciate this interruption of my dreamy day in the ocean.

I was in a strange white room, with huge bright lights. Then four huge pairs of eyes leaned forward and stared at me, real close. They started to make strange sounds and softly laughed. One pair of eyes was horrible-looking — like a worm-picker with a light on his forehead. There was no sign of my seahorse anywhere.

One of the pairs of eyes leaned forward and gently took me in its arms. And so I became this person called Jane Siberry. It was October 12 1955, and I was born in a hospital in Toronto.

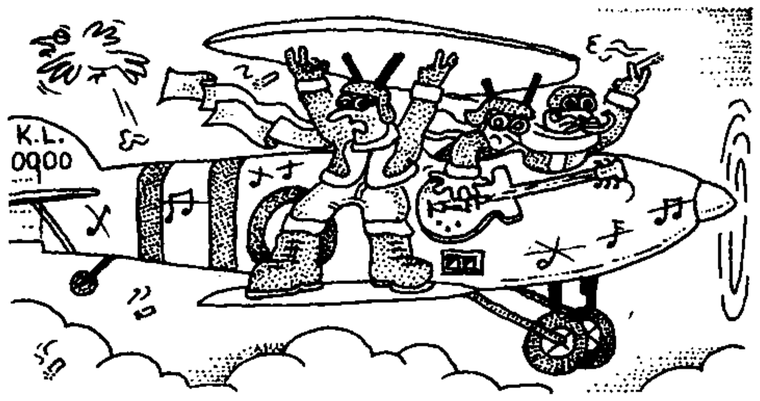
JANE SIBERRY
The Guardian

Pseuds Corner

"Pass the ketchup, Vera"

This paper considers a much-debated question in language and gender studies of the 1990s: are gender-linked speech strategies the consequence of "dominance" or "difference"? One of the key arguments for "difference" as represented by, eg, Deborah Tannen is that "dominance" analysts' classic claims about "powerful" and "powerless" speech styles are vitiated by the multifunctionality of most discourse strategies. This paper agrees, and will look to a more inferential model of communication to produce an alternative account of where power may be operating in male-female talk.

PROFESSOR DEBORAH CAMERON
Departmental Seminars, Dept of English Language, University of Glasgow



They [the pop group *Pavement*] approach an album like first-world-war flying aces, leering through goggles, scarves trailing in the wind, fizzing and buzzing and challenging you, the listener, to avert your gaze — at which point they hit you with the perfect chord/couplet/harmony/riff. It gets you every time.

ANDREW SMITH
Sunday Times Culture Magazine

The drawings you will see in the *New Statesman* leading up to the election will be fuelled by an unforgiving rage, and not only mine. Since 1987 I have refused to draw politicians. I felt that by lavishing hard won skills upon their image I merely augmented their already inflated sense of importance.

RALPH STEADMAN
New Statesman

When the naked Honeychile Rider becomes aware that James Bond is watching her on that beach on Dr No's island, "she didn't cover her body with the two classical gestures. One hand flew downwards, but the other, instead of hiding her breasts, went up to her face, covering it below the eyes, now wide with fear".

Hands which emphasised rather than concealed her nakedness, Middlesbrough covered their shame and their blushes with the two classical gestures of late goals, but they could not hide the fact that they were stripped bare before us on Sunday.

SIMON BARNES
The Times

Sabah, one of my beauticians, follows me around 24 hours a day. She is deaf and dumb. I prefer it that way because the servants worship you; I become their whole world.

PRINCESS SHAHNAZ HUSSAIN
Sunday Times

CONTRIBUTORS: K. Bull, Dr C.G. Woollen, Everyone, A. Hutchison, M. Cornin, Nick Hardy.

£10 paid for entries

EYE TV

Football: England v Italy (Sky Sports 1)

SKY television recently offered vast sums of money to the BBC's main sports presenter, Desmond Lynam, and its best-known football commentator, John Motson, to defect to the satellite channel.

But even though the BBC is gradually losing rights to cover sport and Sky is gradually buying them up, Des and Motty could not be tempted. Loyalty to the BBC is one possible explanation, but it's more likely that they decided it wouldn't be worth being involved in Sky's coverage for any money.

Sky Sports is like a really terrible restaurant that somehow manages to buy up a monopoly on all the available food and wine. Then the arse-scratching, salmonella-infected chef points to the queues outside the door and says: hey, look, they really love my cooking! It is a paradox worthy of examination by Keynes or Galbraith that Sky — a television service set up to increase viewer choice — has been able to succeed only in situations where it denies viewers choice. By choice, around 20 million viewers would have watched the Italy v England world cup qualifier on BBC or ITV. Denied that choice, only four million or so with access to dishes and (a separate fee) subscription to Sky Sports were able to watch it.

So the BBC, with a high-class presenting line-up — Lynam at the front, Alan Hansen and Ruud Gullitt tucked in the middle — was restricted to showing late-night highlights. Meanwhile, Sky Sports — fielding a third division outfit of presenter Richard Keys with pundits Joe Royle and Bryan Robson — had the whole match live. No artistic logic would result in this arrangement; only financial brute force.

Keen to make its coverage look as value-for-money as possible — just in case viewers ever find themselves having to pay for each match singly — Sky's coverage goes on for hours around every match. But the pundits can't talk about the big subject of the season — the effect of all the TV money (courtesy of Sky) that's flooding into football. Instead, the pundits talk bollocks. "Do we [England] look nervous or do we look businesslike?" asked presenter Keys of his panel as the teams came up. Even the ex-footballers could tell this was a stupid question.

But the true horror of Sky's sports coverage is not the banality of the formats or the inanity of the on-screen talent. It is the constant sense of an underlying commercial agenda. Some critics have objected that Sky's approach to sports is nationalist or triumphant on behalf of British teams, but that is quite wrong. What would patriotism matter to an Australian-American with ambitions in China? The truth is that no country or continent is more important than the producing organisation itself.

While ITV is keen to sell advertising time, Sky is keenest to sell itself. The England v Italy coverage was regularly interrupted by commercials for the same channel's forthcoming coverage of Bradford City v Sheffield Wednesday, Leicester v Wimbledon and even Wales v England in the Schoolboy Shield. These ads were merely part of the coverage of the match itself. The official commercial breaks featured ads for forthcoming attractions on Sky Movies and corporate puffs for Sky subscription ("Get ready for March — it's massive!"), obviously intended to reach the dishless forced to watch the match in a pub. This is the dreadful satellite double whammy: the programmes are advertisements for Sky and the advertisements are advertisements for Sky. It's not hard to see that the obvious logic of such a situation is pay-per-view sports.

There are also more insidious forms of self-promotion. Nick Collins's spivvy post-match interviews with the England coach and players are conducted in a wheedling tone of provocation — "How did ya feel when ya saw the team leaked in this morning's papers?" — which seemed calculated to produce headlines for the following day's newspapers and, specifically, of course, for Sky's stablemate, the *Sun*.

What really sticks in the craw of the sports fan is the realisation that England's defeat last week was a good result for Sky. An England victory would virtually have guaranteed the team's qualification for World Cup '98 and rendered the remaining matches relatively unimportant and thus unprofitable. Now the tension will almost certainly last until the final match in the qualifying group in Rome in October. Don't be entirely surprised if that fixture is chosen for one of Sky's experiments in pay-per-view.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

WITH the Albanian government looking more flaky every day, *Channel 4 News* last week naturally sought an independent expert to explain what it all meant. The pundit chosen for this delicate assignment was Joan Hoey of the Economist Intelligence Unit.

What viewers may not have realised was that this supposedly objective "Balkan specialist" used to be known as Joan Phillips, deputy editor of the Revolutionary Communist Party's glossy journal *Living Marxism* — in which capacity she was one of the most fanatical Serb empire loyalists in the whole of the British media, not excluding Sir Alfred Sherman and the late Nora Ballsoff.

In her Joan Phillips guise, she denied the existence of Serb concentration camps, refused to believe in stories of Serbian ethnic cleansing, and at one point in 1993 laid on a photographic exhibition in London on behalf of a member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences — the same academy that wrote out the notorious Serbian Memorandum of 1986, calling for the destruction of the delicate balance of power established by Tito.

This isn't the first time that Joan Phillips/Hoey has turned up on Channel 4. In August 1993 she presented her own programme slagging off the war correspondents for alleged Serbophobia — presumably C4's idea of "balancing" the *Bloody Bosnia* series which it put on that summer.

Meanwhile her old paper *Living Marxism* continues to fight the bad fight. In the latest issue, editor Mick Hume prints a long article by a German Serbomaniac claiming that the famous pictures of starving Bosnians in Serbian camps were fabricated. This is the same Mick Hume who in September 1995 complained that the Serbs had been declared guilty of genocide and ethnic cleansing on evidence insufficient to convict a bicycle thief. Not to be outdone, Hume's chum Joan Phillips asked sarcastically if Madeline Albright had X-ray eyes when she revealed the existence of a mass grave of 2,700 victims of the Srebrenica massacre.

Living Marxism — and Joan Phillips/Hoey — would remain in well-deserved obscurity were it not for the fact that their opinions coincide exactly with those of a large section of the establishment. Why, even the ultra-respectable Douglas Hurd has discovered that the murderous Slobodan Milosevic is a man he can do business with!

MESSRS Bacon & Woodrow, sometime actuaries to the Mirror Group Pension Fund, have at least one thing in common with Cap'n Bob: a terror of leaks.

Their flagship headquarters, Parkside house in Epsom, was recently rocked by the revelation that two employees had been caught, after hours, engaging in Ugandan discussions on the premises. As Bacon & Woodrow often provide spokespersons for BBC money programmes, news of these "table-polishing" antics could be most embarrassing. And so all employees have now been sent an urgent e-mail warning them that anyone mentioning the incident will face disciplinary action. It explains that staff "have a duty to work together" and "not to spread malicious gossip".

Seriously Unfunny
MY THESIS OF THIS SERIES IS THAT ALL COMEDY IS BASED ON CRUELTY...
AND THE POINT HAS BEEN AMPLY PROVED TO ANYONE WATCHING...
BY THE JOKER WHO COMMISSIONED ME TO DO IT
"Where There's A Fool, There's A Phallus"
"You said it, mate!"
Ken Pyne

THESE are exciting times at beleaguered Anglia Television, the Norwich branch office of puritanical Lord "Alco" Hollick's United News and Media empire.

Martin Lord, the director in charge of the ITV-networked *Vanessa* chat-show, has departed from the company in mysterious circumstances, and an intense cover-up is underway. Nobody knows why the shaven-headed Lord, a close chum of such beautiful people as Dale Winton and Lily Savage, made such a hasty exit; but rumours are rife.

Peter Meier, the personnel officer, has warned staff that if anybody finds out the reason and talks to the newspapers they will be dismissed forthwith. "If it gets out," one senior executive warned, "we'll be splashed all over the *News of the World*." Hacks from the *Screws* are indeed ferreting around, and Anglia bosses are wondering whether to go public to forestall a tabloid *exposé*.

This is merely the latest in a series of embarrassments for Anglia TV. After Lord Archer and the share scandal, the company was taken over by milord Bollick — whose henchman, mountainous rugby fanatic Malcolm Wall, promptly fired a third of the staff.

Wall has since returned to London where he now belongs to the hit squad busily wrecking the *Express*, and has appointed his old drinking-chum Graham Creelman to run Anglia in his absence. Morale at the Norwich station has since plummeted further, with philandering and nepotism running riot.

"You fool – you forgot to get any gossip"

LIVE TV boss Kelvin MacKenzie generously ensured that fine champagne and pouting lap dancers were on the menu when he hosted the launch of the station's local news network in Edinburgh last month.

Alas, this heady mixture proved too much for *Daily Record* hack Stephen Rafferty and Scottish *Sun* columnist and shock jock Scottie McClue. Their tête-à-tête turned nasty when Rafferty was reminded of the time he had hidden in McClueless's garden shrubbery in the hope of a dawn scoop.

Fortunately Kelvin was spared the embarrassment of this fracas being printed in his old paper after a grovelling apology from Liam Kane, head of Mirror group Scotland to Scottish *Sun* editor Bob Bird.

LUVVIE ROMPS

WITH a dramatic flourish, the *Daily Hellograph* revealed last week that a new biography of Dame Peggy Ashcroft "is expected to claim" that the distinguished actress had a string of lovers, including Paul Robeson. The book also reports Harold Pinter's denial that he ever discussed Ugandan theatrical techniques with Dame Peggy.

Oddly enough, visitors to the Pinter household in Campden Hill Square recall that in the early days of his marriage to Lady Magnesia Freelove, Dame Peggy would sometimes be espied in the street outside hurling abuse at the window. No doubt she was simply rehearsing her lines for some play or other.

As for the Paul Robeson dalliance, this may well be true but is hardly a scoop. Robeson's affair with Ashcroft was discussed in Martin Bauml Duberman's biography of the American actor, published as long ago as 1989.

In its typically tasteful coverage of the story last week, the *Telegraph* noted Peggy Ashcroft's observation that "Robeson disproved the theory that negroes were better endowed than white men". This must be rather gratifying for Harold Pinter: not only is he mentioned in the same breath as one of the great left-wing icons of the 20th century, but he learns that he outshines him in the bedroom department. Those who wish to know about Pinter's own accoutrements are referred to Michael Billington's recent biography of our most eminent playwright, in which he is described as having a member of more than usual length.

HACKWATCH: CHRISSY ILEY

SAY what you like about Dr Raj Persaud and his fellow media-shrinks, but at least they do have some sort of qualification as pop psychologists. The same cannot be said of Chrissy Iley, the pouting bimbo who fills a page of the *Sunday Times* every weekend with her intrusive and presumptuous observations on the "Relationship of the Week". True, she has slept with plenty of men — but does this really entitle her to offer unsolicited marriage guidance? Apparently so:

15 September: Clint Eastwood and Sondra Locke are engaged in an acrimonious palimony dispute. She should have guessed that Clint would leave her in the lurch: "Never trust a man who thinks he's a cowboy," Chrissy advises.

29 September: Why have so many women fallen for Steven "Shagger" Norris MP? Chrissy wouldn't have been so gullible: "He was always at odds with himself... He hates exercise and has never been interested in competitive sport. Never trust a man who isn't interested in sport: their mental aerobics will be going all the time."

27 October: Trevor Nunn and Imogen Stubbs — don'tcha hate 'em? For starters, he's old enough to be her father "so one can't help but be slightly Freudian". Then there's his habit of writing angry letters to the press: "Never trust anyone who writes complaining letters to newspapers. It is themselves they are dissatisfied with." Imogen's no better, boasting that she enjoys "the privilege of having a Marks & Spencer charge card". Get real, lady! An M&S charge card isn't a privilege, it's an essential. "But she is not of the real world, and apparently doesn't know that you can never trust a woman without an M&S charge card."

10 November: This week's specimen for dissection is George Clooney — and his many female admirers. "Women adore him. Those chocolatey eyes, they look as if they've suffered..." But beware, girls: "Never trust a man you want to protect."

17 November: Caroline Aherne and her new lover have had a violent encounter with her ex-husband, Peter Hook, and his new fiancée. Chrissy saw it all coming, of course: "Never trust a 40-year-old man with a catalogue of groupies, girlies and one-night stands parading in his past and who suddenly acquires a fiancée." Right ho.

24 November: Daniel Day-Lewis and his new wife Rebecca Miller are given the treatment. "They could be siblings. He is only ever attracted to women who look a bit like him, because he's still looking for who he is." Oh, and he "seems to have a combustible psyche that has burst within himself". So what hope is there? "It's kamikaze love, and I doubt it will last." Next!

8 December: Brad Pitt and Gwyneth Paltrow are engaged. Chrissy is unimpressed. "The reason I have never thought that Brad was particularly sexy was that I have never, no matter how hard I have tried, been able to bestow upon him any kind of original intelligence," she declares loftily. As for Gwyneth — sure, she did a brilliant English accent in *Emma*, but even that counts against her. "You can never trust a woman who does great accents. Too chameleon..."

15 December: "I have to admit that I am fond of Chris Evans." But she cannot let personal preferences stand in the way of her professional duty. She knew that his relationship with Suzi Aplin was doomed when she read that they call each other "Baby". Can you guess the moral of the story? "Never trust anyone who calls you Baby..."

29 December: Harry Enfield and his fiancée Lucy Lyster are this week's lucky couple. Chrissy confidently classifies Enfield as "someone who is damaged". Why so? "He is an only child. Only children are often slightly alienated... Only children are controllers who fear losing control..." The only flaw in this expert diagnosis is that Harry Enfield isn't an only child at all: he has three sisters. But never mind. Chrissy has an all-too-predictable fallback position: "Maybe he sees all women as the mother figure..."

5 January 1997: Plumbing fascinating new depths, Chrissy analyses the "relationship" between Prince William and Alex Miller — "the girl who met him outside the church in Sandringham last weekend, and wrote him a note with the £2.40 bunch of carnations she gave him to say that he deserved the best in life". Although William and Alex met only fleetingly, Chrissy nevertheless manages to produce a 1,000-word account of his sexual tastes.

"Will Prince William grow up with a particular sense of entitlement? Yes, all men do... Sure, he'll want a woman who looks like a model and doubles as a brood mare, and that's nothing to do with him being royal. It's to do with the fact that all men marry their mothers, and that's why they leave the women they marry, usually for other women that are also their mothers." Poor Prince William: only 14 years old and as good as divorced already.

19 January: "Just what sort of relationship can Joaquin Cortes and Naomi Campbell have?" Chrissy wonders. She fears it can't last, and here's why: Cortes once presented his previous girlfriend with a large white fluffy toy. "Never trust a man who gives you a large white fluffy toy," she warns.

26 January: At the age of 64, Omar Sharif announces that he has stopped pursuing women. "Of course, it could be all his mother's fault. Like all men who are great seducers, he has a great matriarch waiting back at home... Never trust a man with a mother obsession."

2 February: Tim Henman and his girlfriend Lucy Heald are both ultra-nice and ultra-sane. Surely even Chrissy can't find a cloven hoof here? Oh yes she can. "He was once asked what it meant to him to be in the Wimbledon quarter-final, and he said: 'I'm not bothered.' How quintessentially English of him — gauche and boyish. Never trust a man who says: 'I'm not bothered'." Still, he's not all bad: although he earned about £250,000 last year, he still drives a small Peugeot. "This in itself is charming. I always find you can trust a rich man who drives a small car." So can he be trusted or not? We aren't told.

9 February: "I hate describing people by referring to their age," Chrissy announces. "Often, I forget to put in the ages of the people I write about in this column." A likely story. Without further ado, she poses the big question: why has 35-year-old Ralph Fiennes taken up with Francesca Annis, 52 — "a woman old enough to be his mother"? Yes, it's our old friend the Oedipus complex: "Men often repeat relationships. You know, they have a mother, and then they date one." Pisspoor hackettes, by contrast, would never dream of repeating themselves. Would they?

I-BSkyB

Mr Messenger said, "I am absolutely thrilled for her [Page 3 girl, Melinda Messenger], very proud. I could cry with joy, to be honest. She is a wonderful looking girl and she has a lovely personality. We are taping her on Sky TV."

The Times

CONTRIBUTOR: Steve Wynne.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

DOING THE ROUNDS

ALLEGATIONS of paedophilia and drug abuse at Merseyside's Ashworth Special Hospital suggest little has been learnt since the damning public inquiry of 1993, when those staff not directly involved in the abuse colluded by failing to speak out.

Despite calls for staff to be given the freedom and protection to expose abuse and mismanagement, once again it has fallen to a former patient to blow the whistle. Consultant psychiatrist Dr Ian Strickland, chief executive Janice Mills and two male nurses have been suspended, and an inquiry is underway to substantiate whether claims of a child being smuggled in for sex and an active Internet porn link are true.

Unison branch chairman and Ashworth nurse John Fillis claims that managers have consistently declined to carry out an internal inquiry that might have exposed problems earlier. "Instead of dealing with problems, they try to cover them up, because as a service provider they do not want to market bad news. Ashworth is out of control."

With the proliferation of staff gagging clauses and NHS trust spin doctors across the country, bad news like this will continue to remain buried for as long as possible.

● PETER CAMPION, PR chief of **Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust**, has sent a briefing document to members of the trust executive on "managing politicians and the media during a general election". "We must expect the NHS to be part of the campaign," he observes. "Intensive care and other bed shortages, delays, cancellations, cash shortages, rationing and differential waiting are all predictable subjects across the country, but we have skeletons in our cupboards [sic], marginal seats, and a prominent Labour MP so we may therefore be a prime target... How should we behave?"

Mr Campion answers the question for colleagues. "Do not write or say things that can be quoted for political advantage, not just to politicians but to GPs etc." When dealing with requests for information "it is legitimate to add extra facts to provide a more balanced picture." Visits by politicians are "an opportunity to show off things we are proud of" (not skeletons in the cupboard, presumably), but "we need to be cautious about what we say to candidates." In the even of a media crisis "we need to go into crisis management mode, and we must agree and maintain a corporate line" (again not mentioning the skeletons). Finally, "we must agree a mechanism for checking letters, briefing memos etc for political problems" (e.g. skeletons etc).

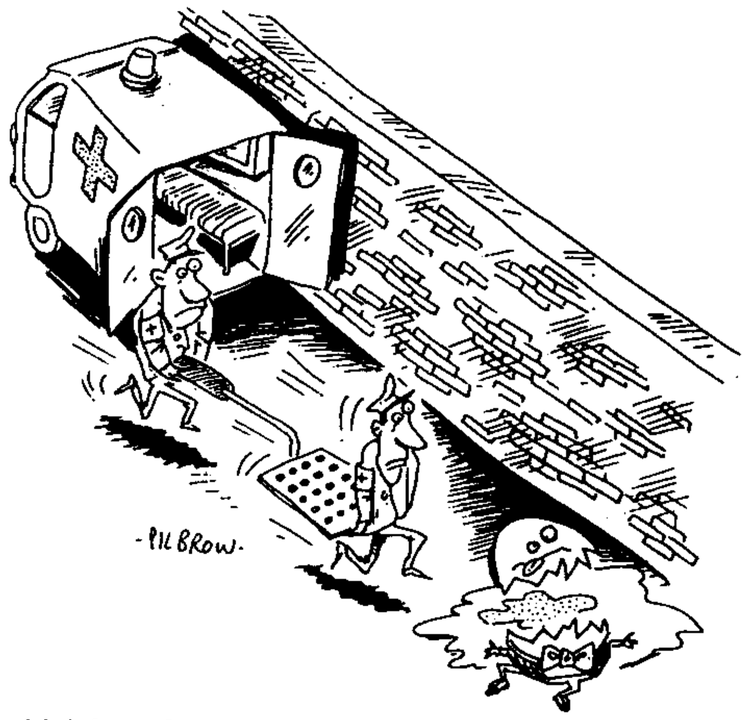
● THOSE trusts on the brink of an election with skeletons on display might wish to follow the example of **Newcastle's Royal Victoria Infirmary Trust**, which is staring at an end of year/beginning of election deficit of £8.5 million. The solution? Advertise for a £27,000 media manager (equivalent to eight hip replacements or two nurses).

● GEOFFREY L. DAVIES, assistant chief executive of **North Glamorgan NHS Trust**, has sent a politically insensitive memo to all members of staff entitled "reduction in hours".

"The trust's management board has been looking at ways of increasing flexible working arrangements... As a result, all staff are invited to consider whether or not they would wish to reduce their working hours. Such a change will be based on the following rules 1. The lower hours worked will be the hours paid. 2. There will be no cover provided for hours lost. 3. There will be no detriment to any patient care services" (i.e. everyone else will have to work twice as hard for the same money in your absence).

● THE **Two Shires Ambulance NHS Trust** has run off a large batch of 1997 diaries, with advertisements for residential homes and car dealers sensitively sandwiched in-between critical illness information. Above a table of pulse rates; breathing and blood pressure in children, is a contribution from the public relations department of Volvo Car UK ltd. "We are pleased to support the Two Shites Ambulance Service." Er, quite.

● **EAST Anglian Ambulance Trust** has bid farewell to its third board member in three months. Chair Brian Plaxton has resigned after just 13 months "for personal reasons", although his £1m fleet of 19 "Canadian-made Tristar ambulances"



which have been out of service for two years with multiple faults can't have helped. Not surprisingly, ambulance response times in Suffolk are not quite up to scratch.

● A MEETING of senior executives from **East London and City Health Authority**, responsible for funding community psychiatric services within the district, concluded that "the prevention of relapse is officially no longer regarded as essential". The government's Care in the Community programme will thus shortly be replaced by Relapse in the Community.

● **BUPA** has upset newly appointed consultants by insisting they undergo a provisional recognition period of up to 18 months, after which they must submit audited results of their operations and treatment before they achieve "substantive consultant recognition" to practise freely on private patients. Does this mean that newly qualified consultants can't be assumed to be competent? I think we should be told.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

THE business lunch and hospitality bill for the **NHS Executive** rose by 75 percent last year to £144,000.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

WHATEVER the eventual fate of lamentable agriculture minister Douglas "Piggy" Hogg, star of a Commons censure motion, one cannot help but admire Labour's capacity for getting hold of the wrong end of the stick.

For while Piggy's track record in day-to-day dealings with the aftermath of the BSE shock has been dire, never let it be forgotten that the man who triggered the crisis was Stephen "Teflon" Dorrell, health secretary. Had "Teflon" never made his ill-advised statement on 20 March last year, "Piggy" would never have been in what, in the final analysis, was an impossible situation. But while "Teflon" walks away unblemished (only to stumble on Scottish devolution), Piggy has been left to take the fall.

What price, then, the proposed appointment of a government food safety adviser to "restore public confidence" in the safety of food? With growing incredulity, we are told that the post is to be filled by someone like Professor John Pattison, chairman of the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee — the very man who in March last year presented his alarmist report to "Teflon" and so launched BSE into orbit.

ANOTHER "player" in the unfolding tragedy which is BSE is Sir David Naish, safely reelected this month as president of the NFU, that great rural organisation congenially known to its growing number of ex-members as "No F***ing Use".

When it comes to U-turns, no politician could even begin to compete with Naish, who at first opposed the selective cull of cattle related to BSE casualties, and now — after ensuring his members' palms are greased with taxpayers' silver — enthusiastically supports butchering yet another 100,000 healthy cattle to add to the million-plus already destroyed.

ON his way out is another player, the egregious Keith "Victor" Meldrum, the Maffia's chief veterinary officer, who steps down in April.

As the late, completely un-lamented chief vet, "Victor" will be remembered as the man who, perhaps only second to Prof Pattison, contributed most to the destruction of the British beef industry — having first practised on the egg industry, when he wiped out 3.5 million laying hens in a fruitless bid to eliminate salmonella. No doubt this good and faithful servant will be amply rewarded by his grateful masters. Arise, Sir Victor, KGB.

"Victor" is a hard act to follow, and is to be replaced by Jim Scudamore, a colourless ministry clone who cut his teeth on attempting (unsuccessfully) to force organic farmer Mark Purdey (*Eyes passim*) to use nerve-gas related organophosphorus (OP) warble fly dressings on his chemical-free dairy herd.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

THE WITHERING AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE (MICRO-BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT)
YOUVE NEVER BEEN HERE ALL NIGHT!!
I'M NOT STOPPING TILL IVE ISOLATED THE VIRUS THAT'S THE CAUSE OF THIS DISASTER!!
BUT HOW ON EARTH CAN YOU BE SO SURE ITS A VIRUS?
SCREEN GOES BLANK WHEN I PRESS FIRE!
SONY
PLAY STATION

ALBERT

LUVVIES

"Joan [Collins] is terrific. Such a good friend. Marvellous woman. Wonderful. To see her relaxed by the pool," he trails off wistfully. "Or eating with her. Or when we're playing Scrabble. She's just such a good mate, you know."

CHRISTOPHER BIGGINS
The Sunday Telegraph Magazine

Submitted by C. Campbell.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

THE
Rotten Borough Advertiser

Friday, 21st February 1997

UP THE DALSTON JUNCTION

HACKNEY's Labour council has outraged locals by pushing through plans for a long awaited tube station on the old Dalston Junction BR site.

But instead of just laying track and rebuilding the station, a consortium comprising the council, the Dalston City Partnership quango and two property companies want to build a tube station-cum-100,000 sq ft leisure and retail shopping development, complete with drive-thru' (sic) burger bar, cut-price food store, multiplex cinema and parking for 250 cars.

Locals complain that the area has already been developed to commercial saturation point. Indeed, a couple of hundred yards away, next to the popular Ridley Road market, is a similar retail complex, the Kingsland Centre. The Dalston Junction scheme would also mean demolishing Dalston Theatre, until recently home to the Four Aces, Britain's oldest West Indian social club, and still a popular venue.

The scheme is the brainchild of development company Chelverton, which already runs a similar venture with supermarket, car park and leisure club in New Cross Gate at the southern end of the East London line, a tube offshoot which is being renovated and might be linked with Dalston.

Others with a strong interest include estate agents and surveyors Chestertons — who appeared in *Property Week* last year as a company "struggling to regain credibility after a series of accounts blunders necessitated profit write-offs of £1.4 million". Chestertons is in charge of the nearby Kingsland shopping centre where there is no room to expand.

Then there is corruption-ridden Hackney council which, along with British Rail, owns the site. Hackney's most powerful councillor, John McCafferty, leader of the split Labour group, desperately wants scores of mega-buck developments to go through to realise his local empire-building aspirations.

Last Christmas the planning committee turned down the station proposals after local community and business groups protested that they want the tube but not a new mini Brent Cross. After the meeting, however, councillors' ears were bent by civil servants who pointed out that should they bow to sentimental public pressure, around £30m in government grants would immediately be axed, along with the councillors' chances of sitting on local quangos. The council took fright and approved the scheme at a special meeting.

IN BRIEF

WAKEFIELD: £15m cuts will mean the closure of three libraries and three old people's homes, and 850 lost jobs. But they will help pay for the council's multi-million pound plan to woo Yorkshire cricket club from Headingley to a greenfield site where local unemployed can watch cricket.

CAMDEN: The Labour council's loan of £500,000 to the Migrant Training Company (MTC), an Irish charity, on top of its annual £13,000 grant, has been deemed illegal because it broke council guidelines. The European Social Fund also made MTC a similar loan which it used to repay Camden — breaking EU rules. Those who award the grants are so annoyed with Camden they threaten to take the money back and give it to the oppressed in Portugal.

HACKNEY: Chief executive Tony Elliston's "strictly confidential" report on the Macdonald inquiry (which said housing boss Bernard Crofton be prosecuted for obtaining reinstatement by deception) makes unhappy reading for Andrew Arden QC, Ian Macdonald QC, Coun John McCafferty and Brian Sedgemore MP. While vindicating Crofton and his supporters (*Eye Told You So passim*), Elliston calls for a new inquiry into why "intrigue and intimidation are accepted as the way in which business is done".

KENT: Councillors facing a £79m shortfall will close five fire stations; halve library opening hours; lop £20m from social services and cut education by more than £8m. This will require a lot of meetings: so just as well the Lab-Lib Dem junta is planning to pay councillors' babysitting costs — up to £18 a session, on top of attendance and yearly allowances.

SOUTH AYRSHIRE: After cutting its budget by £5.4m and axing 300 jobs, the council is spending £170,000 on an exotic garden at its own offices. The plan was unanimously agreed by a committee of Labour and Tory councillors which included the wife of George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Dumnock and Doon.

JUNKETS OF THE WEEK

THE junkets genie is out of the bottle in Glasgow, where details of expenses-paid trips abroad by councillors may be of more than passing interest to Glaswegians facing a likely 25 percent tax increase.

Labour members who have diligently "gathered information" in foreign fields in the last year include: lord provost Pat Lally (Hong Kong and China; Calgary; Bangkok; Rome; New York); council leader Bob Gould (Toronto and Boston); convenor of parks James Mutter (Dublin, Hong Kong, Paris, Montpelier, plus domestic visits to Aviemore, Dunfermline and London); former lord provost Susan Baird (Canada and Boston; China and Hong Kong); arts convenor Frank McAveety (Canada and New York); and Coun Bashir Mann (St Petersburg; Aarhus, in Denmark).

With all the info gathered, they will be well placed to help the 1,200 council workers who are fighting compulsory redundancies, as well as solve the city's predicted £86m deficit.

LOCAL DEMOCRACY

WHEN Epsom and Ewell recently delivered a glossy brochure and free newspaper to 27,000 homes in the borough, the package contained four colour maps regarding a new "relief" road.

Though a new road may not be what residents in M25 land need, they were asked to vote on four options before them – A, B, C and D.

In options A, B and C, blue dotted lines showed different versions of the proposed route, while Option D kept the status quo. When all the votes were added up, Option D — the status quo — came out on top with 33 per cent.

But this didn't tally with the council's preferred plans, so it decided to add together the votes for A and B, which are similar routes, after all. Guess which won now? The new A-B, of course.

So Epsom residents will have a wonderful new road in the next few years — whether they like it or not.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

THERE was much embarrassment for Newham council's Labour leader Robin Wales and his sidekick Chris Rackley following an incident at the Miller's Well hostelry in East Ham.

The councillors were in the pub arguing with members of Newham Monitoring Project, a group which was set up to keep a watch on local police racial harassment but is about to lose its council funding.

The debate became heated and the pub manager stepped in to cool things down — at which point the councillors threatened that he could lose his licence if he did not evict the louts from the monitoring project. The manager, by now annoyed, duly telephoned Inspector Knacker who promptly arrived and escorted two of the rowdies from the premises — Cllrs Wales and Rackley.

I-I-I SPECIAL: This week's Kim Il Sung Award for celebration of one's own magnificence goes to Councillor Gethin Bennett, who charmed grateful *Dyfed News* readers with 13 pictures of himself, including an uplifting set of three colour studies on the front page.

O·B·N

"Suddenly, Julie Christie walks in and the big room lights up and starts to glow, as though a fire has suddenly begun blazing in the grate. She's one of the most stunning women I've ever met, with a beauty that's undimmed and unquenchable, and she's modest too, slipping in without noise or fuss."

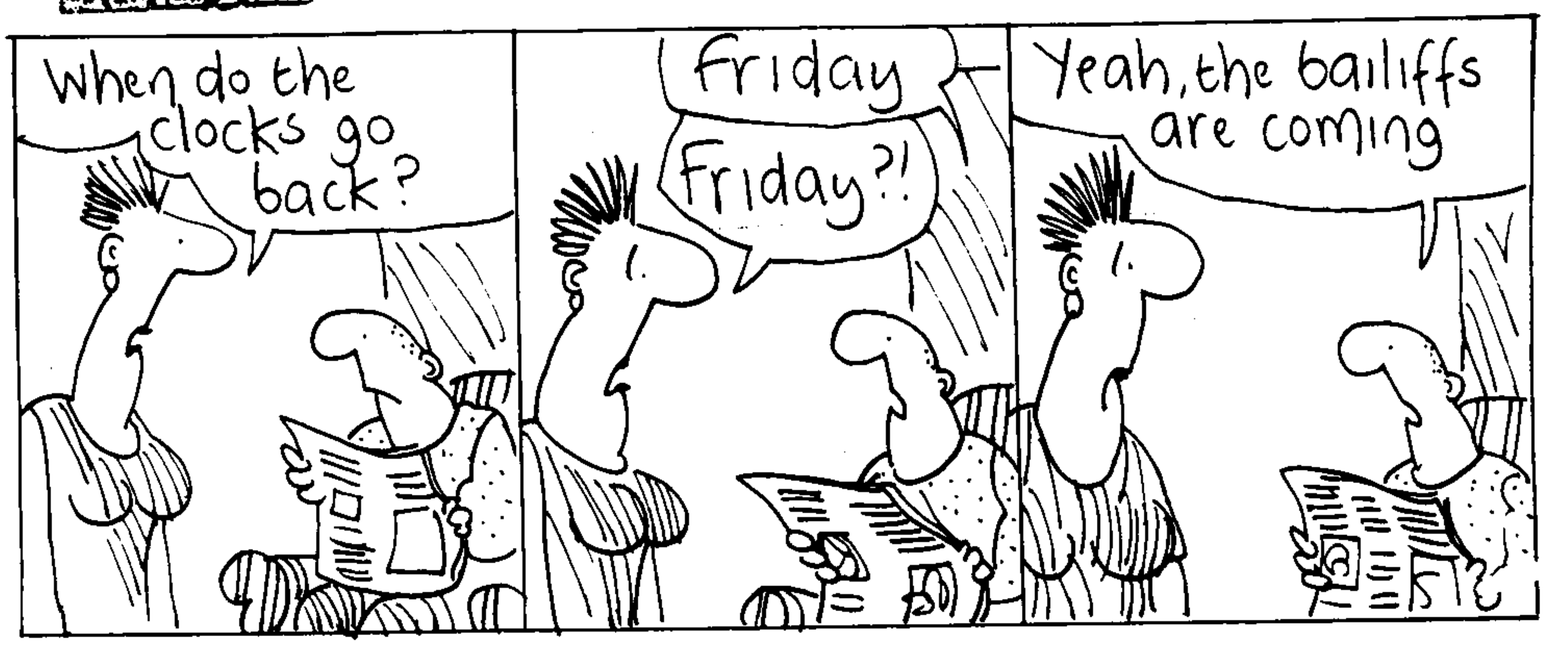
MICHELE ROBERTS, Telegraph Magazine

Submitted by M. Paterson

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Yobs

HUSBAND



Letters

Vote of confidence

Sir,

I read the complaints in the last issue about your use of a picture of Jerry Hayes' family. I'm surprised you didn't respond that politicians can expect their families to be left off front pages when they (politicians) leave them off their election leaflets, and not unless.

In case you have any cancelled subscriptions over the issue, I enclose a cheque for one for us.

Yours faithfully,
ROY BUTTERFIELD,
Keighley, W. Yorkshire.

Small talk

Sir,

Your HP Sauce column reveals that I gave David Mellor a football column after he rang me in a "terrific rage" following a number of attacks on him in THE MIRROR. *Sadly, no such conversation ever took place.*

In fact the last, and indeed only time, I have spoken to Mr Mellor was in February 1995 at the WHAT THE PAPERS SAY *awards when, as you correctly reported at the time, he thanked me for revealing his affair with Lady Cobham in the* NEWS OF THE WORLD *because this had speeded up his divorce proceedings.*

Yours gormlessly,
PIERS "BOY" MORGAN,
Daily Mirror.

Injury time

Sir,

Great! Now we've started we can have a long-running competition to discover the most ludicrous Read Code.

My contribution? Idly browsing one day, I searched on the letters "cat" to find what gruesome feline injuries the clever doctor had devised. Several scrolled feet down the screen appeared the entry "injured in cataclysmic mud slide". He's laughing all the way to the bank.

Yours faithfully,
DR D.J. SHOESMITH,
Saltaire, Shipley.

"Damn...we've been gazumped!"

Southend game

Sir,

Your story about the Southend mayor in this week's Eye would have been even more interesting if you had mentioned the following facts to put it in context:

1. The absurd allegations you mention are being made by a neighbour with whom the mayor has a long-standing dispute.

2. The mayor in question launched his mayoralty with a widely-publicised attack on Masonic influence in public life.

3. Long before any charges were made (it is still not clear that this very trivial case will ever come to court) the local police were busily flogging the story to every journalist they could get hold of. Why, do you suppose?

Yours sincerely,
R.R. CLARK,
Leigh on Sea, Essex.

Lookalike

Christina

Nicola

Sir,

Ms Horlick and Mr Dawes are undoubtedly related. And their common ancestor is none other than Christina of Denmark, Duchess of Milan, whose portrait by Holbein the Younger hangs in the National Gallery. I am glad to have resolved this question.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID BIRD,
Luton, Beds

Bang on

Sir,

*Your account of the Woodcock Cock incident at Whitemoor prison (*EYE *917) contains an intriguing combination of facts: 1) seventy strands of steel in the fence were cut, 2) this resulted in a flap of mesh which was bent back, 3) the cutting operation apparently took less than four minutes and 4) Neil Pearson, a prison guard, reported hearing a loud bang at the moment the alarm went off.*

Now the ideal tool for such a job — short of a tank — is unquestionably not a pair of bolt cutters but one or two lengths of linear cutting charge (LCC). In its commonest form, this consists of a narrow metal tube filled with explosive and with a groove down one side.

Such a charge could be attached to the fence in about four seconds, the user would need about another four seconds to retire a reasonably safe distance, and, eight seconds after that — Bingo! — out pop the rabbits.

The resulting cut would be very neat and most observers would assume that bolt cutters had been used. Close examination of the cut ends is unambiguously diagnostic, however: the characteristically striated cut ends are coated with a fine layer of the metal used in the confection of the LCC.

On the other hand, explosives were clearly not used in the present case or we would surely have been told, and the loud bang was probably someone shooting woodcock.

Yours faithfully,
SIDNEY ALFORD,
Sidney Alford Ltd Explosives Engineering,
Corsham, Wilts.

Just in case

Sir,

*Backbiter suggests (*EYE *917) that because Cherie Booth represented an NHS trust which was trying to make a surgeon redundant, she might try to promote the trust's interests with a Labour government.*

You, sir, have had occasion to hire lawyers to represent you on more than one occasion. Have you asked them whether they really and truly believe you are right? I suspect that if you did ask them that, they would reply that not only do they not have to believe you, but they can do their job better by being dispassionate. A lawyer is not required to identify himself or herself with the client's interests. It is the court's job to decide who is right; the lawyer's job is to put the client's case as well as it can fairly be put.

Yours sincerely,
M.G. HARMAN,
Camberley, Surrey.

Putting a Foot wrong

Sir,

Thanks for the mention in Street of Shame. Being described as "a Montgomery man through and through" surely won't go amiss when salary review time comes round. Most kind.

However your story reminds me of the response given some years ago by one of your contributors to a question from a young journalist on the Mirror Group training scheme. Asked which publication he had most enjoyed working on, Paul Foot, for it was he, replied that it was PRIVATE EYE.

"You had complete journalistic freedom," he told the budding scribes who were anxious to learn valuable lessons for the future from Spart the sage. But then he rather spoilt it all by adding: "You didn't even have to bother about the truth."

Comforting to know that in an ever-changing world your standard of reporting and, of course, the accuracy of your sources, remain as high as ever.

Yours sincerely,
COLIN HARROW,
Deputy Group Managing Editor, Mirror Newspapers.

Eye spy

Sir,

Your running saga in the manner of the Bond 007 fantasies appears to be misdirected, in being entirely miscast.

Surely Herr Kohl is a dead ringer for Goldfinger, with the Brussels Commission as his henchmen and the Euro judges as piranha fish. Your friend Sir James Goldsmith would more than adequately fill the role of Bond in attempting to frustrate a megalomaniac. "Achtung" might then make sense. Perhaps a look at the Treaty of Rome, as at 25 March 1957 (HMSO SBN 11 560106) might help to fill in the plot and give the piece some relevance.

Your long time subscriber,
ALFRED DOOLEY,
Bexhill on Sea, E. Sussex.

Fowl play

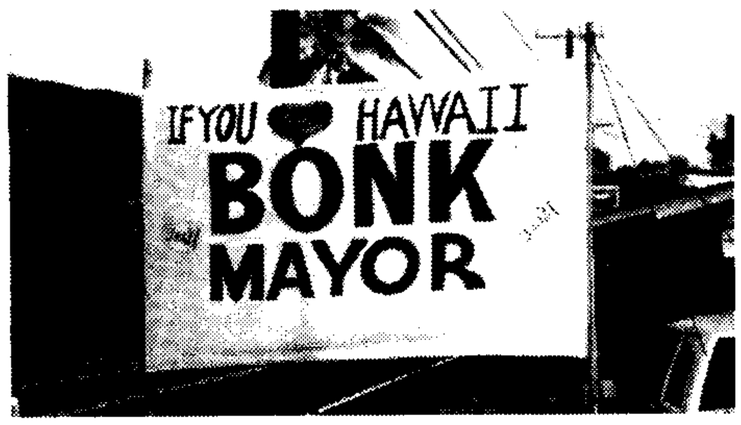
Sir,

New Muckspreader's whining about the scandal of farmers being expected not to poison us as a condition of feeding at the subsidy trough is always irritating, but in EYE *917 it moves on to be ludicrous. Apparently chickens are suffering from lack of animal protein. Oh really? That explains all those old pictures of chickens hunting and killing cows and sheep in the days before factory farms.*

Or perhaps the real problem is that proper feeding for chickens takes too big a bite of the subsidy cheque and so ground up animals are used as a cheap source of protein.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW ROONEY,
London W4.

I-SPY *Hawaii*



Submitted by Donald Beer. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Super natural

Sir,

Perhaps Square Eyes should buy a copy of the FORTEAN TIMES *and read on the contents page what is meant by "Forteanism". Maybe then he would understand why stories featured on "Fortean TV" are not played for laughs.*

Yours,
SIMON BLOXHAM,

Via e-mail.

Lip service

Sir,

*Graham Mills' Colemanballs submission (*EYE *917) attributes the quotation "He gives us unbelievable belief" to Arsenal's Ian Wright. Wright did use the phrase in a studio conversation with Des Lynam and the boy Hansen — but he was mocking his team mate (and erstwhile man of substance) Paul Merson, through whose lips it (ie, the utterance) had passed during an earlier TV interview. Unremarkably remarkable!*

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD HAMILTON,

Via e-mail.

Club member

Sir,

When I heard I had made my first appearance in Books & Bookmen, I wanted to send a thank-you message to Bookworm. However, "Dear Bookworm" is no way to start a letter, so I asked friends who spend time at the Groucho to tell me his real name. To my surprise, nobody knew for sure; but most of my friends thought that Bookworm is a sad character who lurks in the darkest corners of publishing parties. Apparently, the root of his unhappiness is that Mother Nature cruelly endowed him with a penis so small that no Western woman can tell if he is in or out. This predicament forced him to find solace in the arms of an Eastern matron, an elderly expert in the fabled Wallis Clutch which secured a small King for Mrs Simpson. Alas, even Shanghai Lilly got tired of Bookworm after a while. This final rejection forced him to flee London, and hide in a remote corner of the country.

However, it could be that all of the above is worthless crap, almost as accurate as what he wrote about my wife and me.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM GILL,

London N1.

Nothing fishy

Sir,

There is a simple reason my EXPRESS ON SUNDAY *review of Guppy's book did not mention that I shopped him because I had just been arrested for an insurance fraud of my own. I hadn't been. This allegation is lifted straight from the pages of Darren's [sic] memoirs and I'm a bit surprised that Bookworm bought it. After all,* ROLL THE DICE *is a work of the purest fantasy. I was arrested in early 1991 for conspiracy to handle a stolen diamond but the charges were dropped when it was established that the diamond in question was not stolen.*

In any event, I first approached the police in April 1990, almost a year before this incident. I was no more the third man in the scam than half a dozen other prosecution witnesses at the gaudy little fish's trial. But particular venom is directed at me because I was the first person to notify the police. No charges were brought against me because there was nothing to charge me with. I made no deals with the police.

Guppy is a nasty little prick whose book has defamed a dozen people in the calculated hope that they will see no advantage in spending thousands suing a bankrupt for libel. He is, as my review made clear, jolly cross with me and this type of allegation is designed to make my life awkward. In this, Guppy has been as successful as he was as a crook.

Yours faithfully,
PETER RISDON,

Cottenham, Cambridgeshire.

there were no regrets about Brown's self imposed straitjacket: 'The Conswervatives have so debased political debate *Observer*

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Up here, winter can strike at any time of the year."

Trailer for 'Wilderness Walks', BBC2
(A. Blair)

"Feyenoord were on very thin water there."

Commentator, Eurosport
(Gordon Dent)

"There are thousands of people out there who haven't claimed for deafness because they haven't heard about it."

Retired Major, Radio 4
(John Duder)

"Liverpool are playing quite well, even now they've got the ball."

HOWARD WILKINSON, Radio 5 Live
(N. Senkus)

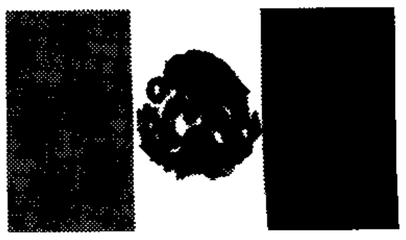
Iain Anderson: *And what's a lassie from Turiff doing with an Arsenal scarf round her neck, then?*

Lassie from Turiff: *I'm an Arsenal supporter.*

BBC Radio Scotland
(Mike Wilkinson)

HOM SAP

AUSTIN



Letter from **Mexico City**

from Our Own Correspondent

VICIOUS infighting in the ranks of a deeply unpopular ruling party staring electoral defeat in the face... Sleaze and sex scandals in a government espousing family values... Cash for contracts and a sell-off the family silver at a fraction of its value... Resumption of an armed conflict in a distant province following the breakdown of peace talks... Does it remind you of somewhere, by any chance?

No wonder British ministers from Ken Clarke down have been taking a special interest in Mexico recently. The nominal motive is one of those periodic, mirage-in-the-desert economic revivals here. In reality the Tories might just be desperate enough to show interest in the electoral alchemy that has allowed our incongruously-titled Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) to live up to its name and retain power for 70 years. With only 17 years on the clock, Major's lot might learn a thing or two.

Fear is the lowest common denominator. With crucial mid-term elections here set to follow the electoral verdict in Britain, fear of defeat at the polls, and the use of fear as a campaigning tool, is the only hope for both washed-out governments. If the Tories overt slogan is New Labour, New Danger, the covert one here is a none-too-subtle variation: New Democracy, New Danger.

But if the rash of skeletons and sleaze that has accompanied the dissection of the last government here is anything to go by, Britons are in for some riveting entertainment post-election. "I'm giving up," complained one of our top novelists, Carlos Fuentes, on hearing last week's revelations. "What could a writer invent to top this melodrama?" You do have to ask. A jilted mistress, two murdered politicians, an implicated first family, a missing legislator, bent prosecutors and a psychic who didn't see it all coming — the latest episode is more fanciful than any of the soaps we Mexicans lap up.

As so often in Mexico, it started with murder: in this case a pair — the assassination of the PRI ruling party's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, in March 1994, and the murder of Jose Francisco Ruiz, party deputy leader, six months later.

When Colosio's successor acceded to the presidency in the time-honoured fashion of all PRI candidates, the traditional "clean-up" that serves to help foster the illusion of change every six years had a new urgency. The new attorney-general Antonio Lozano Gracias arrested the ex-president's brother, Raul Salinas. Murder conspiracy charges were rapidly added to those of "illegal enrichment". US$120 million secreted in Swiss bank accounts did seem a bit excessive for a man declaring a taxable income of US$8,000 a year.

In October, led by a psychic who felt "vibrations", police announced the discovery of skeletal remains on a ranch owned by Raul Salinas. This, the prosecutors claimed, was the body of a PRI legislator who knew about the killing of Ruiz and had gone missing the day after his death. "Conclusive proof" Raul had murdered the one man who could link him to the killing, the attorney general told a credible public.

Not quite. Last week the remains turned out to be those of a relative of the psychic's, disinterred from a Mexico City cemetery and then buried on the ranch. The psychic and Raul Salinas' jilted mistress Maria Bernal have now been charged with graverobbing, among other things, the prosecutors all sacked and the vilified Salinas brothers temporarily vindicated.

But if the new gang tried to frame the Salinas mob, there is no shortage of real crimes. Raul is not leaving jail soon, and brother Carlos, the ex-president, still dares not show his face in Mexico.

It all raises tantalising possibilities for Britain. John Major forced into exile to raise horses in Ireland like poor Carlos? Terry Major-Ball jailed as his brother's bagman in crooked privatisation deals? Half the former cabinet in hiding for fear of public retribution? It's enough to make you want to vote.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

O "Mister robbers, you have cleaned us out. Please do not visit us anymore. It is not worth your while. You have already taken everything of value."

Thus began an ad in a Mexican Sunday newspaper, placed there by the Robles family of Guanajuato. "You robbed us three times in December. First you took our television set and our VCR, then our jewellery, computers, ironing board and bread bin. Next time, you had all our curtains, a complete lavatory, and our shower fittings. Finally you took our cooker, our refrigerator and, God help us, all our chickens, then you returned the next day to have away their coop. So we had to start going out to eat. But that was not enough for you. No, it was not. On December 27th, you staged a hold-up at our local restaurant, and stole all our cash, credit cards, and my wife's necklace, earrings, and wig. You even took our half-eaten hamburgers.

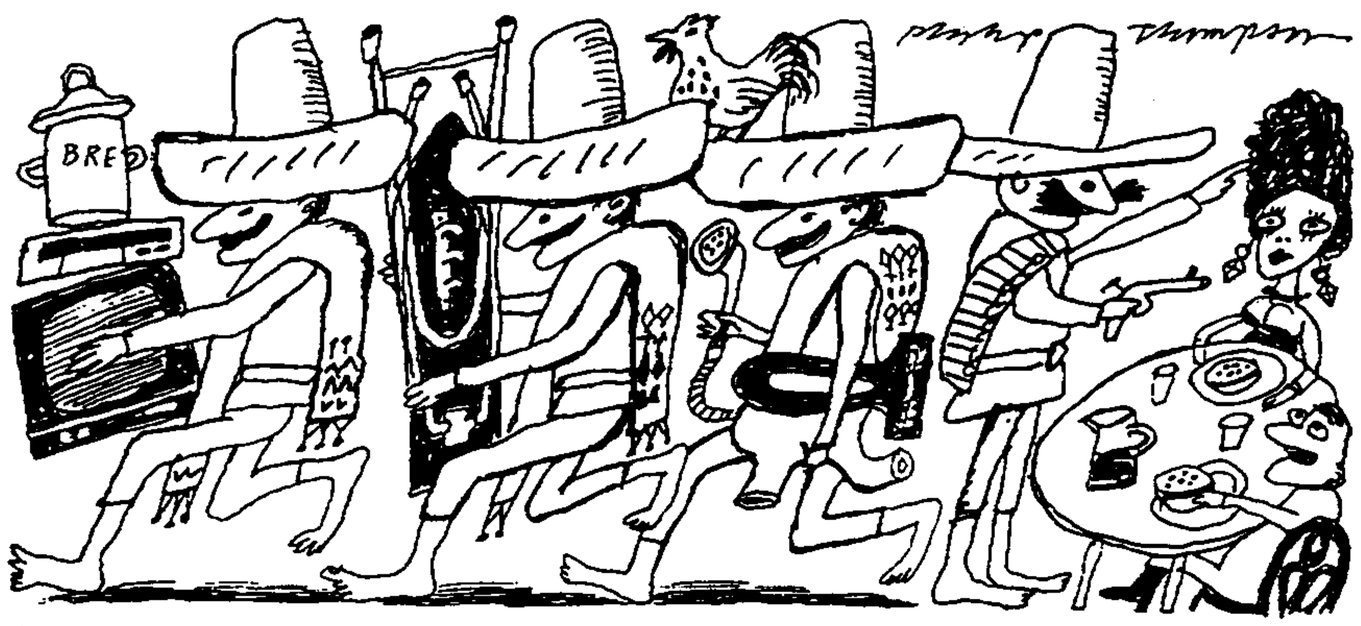
"Your work is now done. Please leave us alone, if only for six months, until we have something new worth stealing." *(Noticias [Guanajuato] 26/1/97 Spotter???)*

— O —

O "Our client has been treated outrageously," lawyers for Shearer Osbourne told reporters in Lionel Town, Jamaica, shortly after his release from jail.

"Mr Osbourne was punished for the frailty of his wind valves, and will now be seeking exemplary damages against the Attorney General and Resident Magistrate Norma McIntosh."

Earlier, the lawyers had explained the circumstances surrounding the incident, which took place late last year. "Our client had only gone to the Lionel Town courthouse to accompany his cousin, who was charged with minor parking offences and aggravated rape. A fisherman by trade, known to his friends as 'Fatgutty', Osbourne suffers from a digestive ailment and, unwisely perhaps, had gorged on pickles before setting off. He had already been thrown off a bus for excessive flatulence, but it was during the hearing that his gastric difficulties became severe, forcing him to belch very loudly and repeatedly from the public gallery. While Magistrate McIntosh was warning him not to disturb proceedings again, he was unable to prevent a real rasper from coming out, and she interpreted this last eructation as contempt of court. My client is able to belch while speaking, and, in anger, he then rasped an insulting epithet at the judge. She objected to being called a 'stinking shitty shitty face' and sentenced my client to a fortnight's jail. Call that justice?" *(Newsday [Trinidad and Tobago], 25/1/97. Spotter: Bill Thow)*



— O —

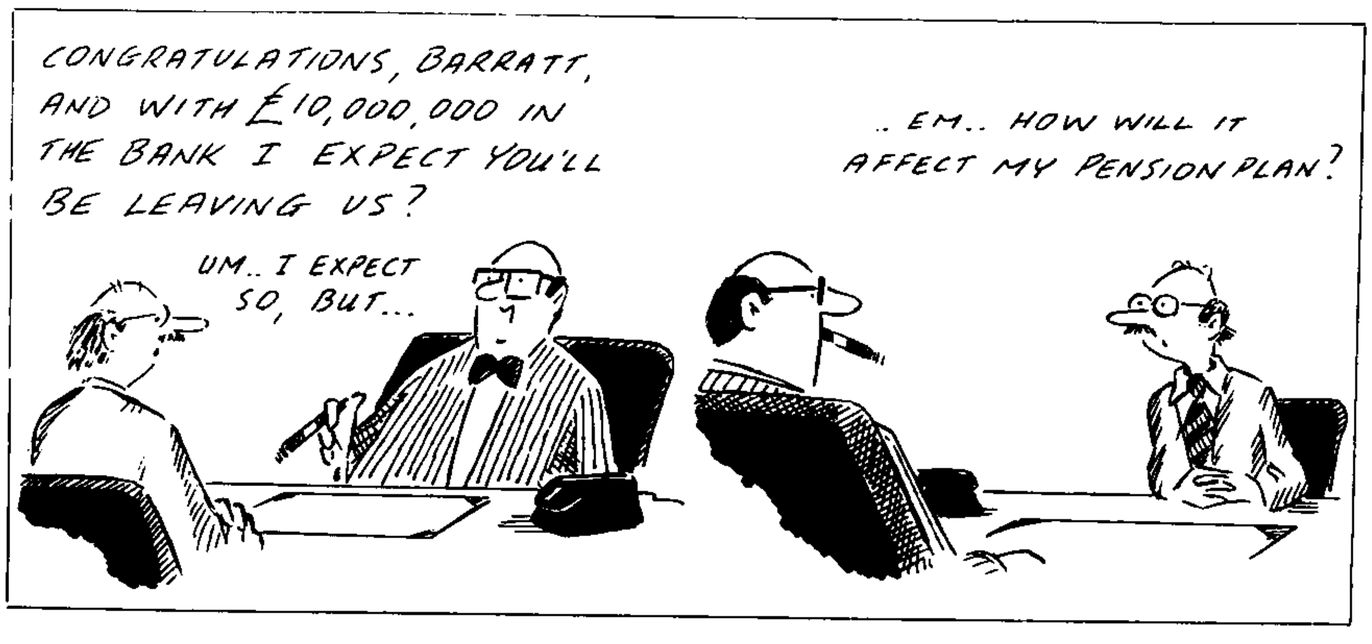
O *"I feel gutted," Peter Fitzpatrick told reporters at his Chester home, shortly after the death of his two pet goldfish. "When things like this happen, it makes you wonder if there really is a God."*

Fitzpatrick, a 51-year-old fish lover, recalled what had happened earlier that day. "It had been a bitterly cold night, and when I looked in the pond I saw that Millican and Nesbitt were both frozen solid in the ice. Quick as a flash, I hacked at the ice around them with an axe, took them inside, and started to thaw them out in the sink. Amazingly, as the ice melted, they started to come back to life, so I took them next door in a jam jar and put them in my neighbour's tropical fish tank to warm up thoroughly. Unfortunately, my neighbour neglected to inform me that he'd recently acquired a pair of orange and black striped Oscars, each over a foot long and as deadly as piranhas. And, while I was busy celebrating their miraculous recovery, poor old Millican and Nesbitt were having their insides sucked out through their mouths." (Angling Times, 22/1/97. Spotter: Ray Brown)

COMPILED BY
Victor Lewis-Smith

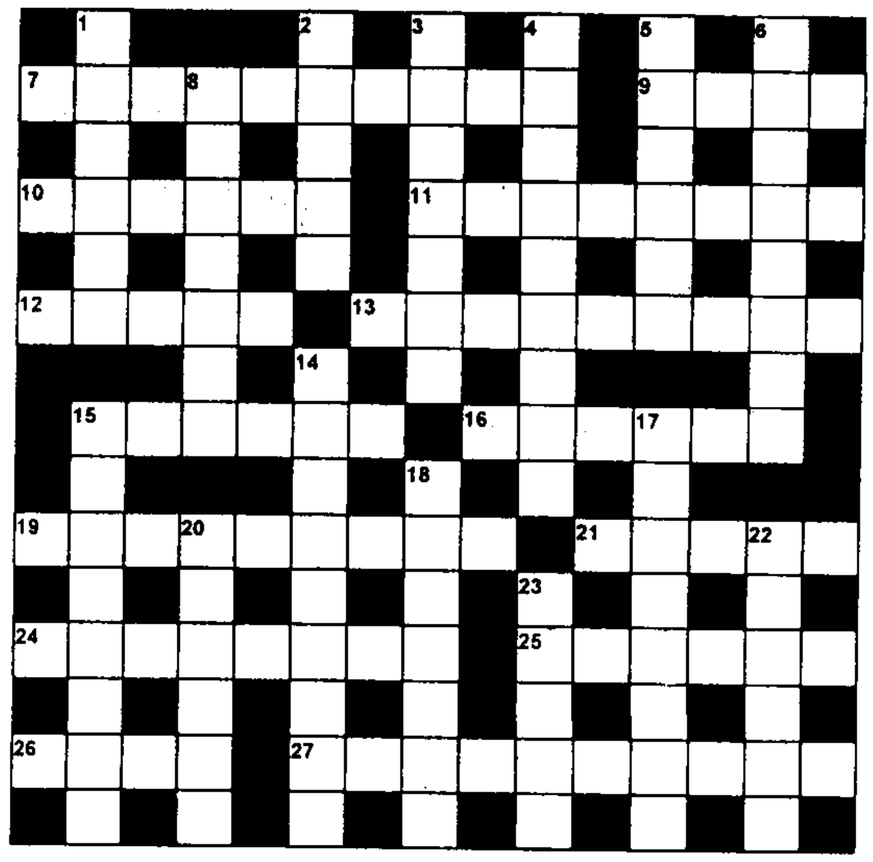
The Lottery Winners

TURNER


CONGRATULATIONS, BARRATT, AND WITH £10,000,000 IN THE BANK I EXPECT YOU'LL BE LEAVING US?
UM.. I EXPECT SO, BUT...
.. EM.. HOW WILL IT AFFECT MY PENSION PLAN?

EYE CROSSWORD 73

by Cyclops — *£100 prize*



ACROSS

7 (see 12)
9 Brit abroad of ever diminishing service to the world? (4)
10 What Thatcher said she'd never do: inject money to achieve recovery (6)
11 Can hurt expression be concealed by maligned *Hallo!?* Yes (8)
12/7/27 A paper tiger to opponents and supporters alike (5,10,10)
13 His bloody features are shocking, his players all swear (9)
15 For today's players, perhaps, it takes a bit of poetry to get high (4-2)
16 Fat arse vital to some old banger? (3,3)
19 Sex with Kennedy — something royal watchers flaunt? (5,4)
21/5 Insulting to the finish, it's said, this MP (5,6)
24 Richard's wrinkly organ (3,5)
25 Live broadcast — Conservative has no alternative but flippancy (6)
26 Labour leader's bottom (4)
27 (see 12)

DOWN

1 'Old boiler' — is that PC? (6)
2 Sort of state feared most by those old Tories who had one? (5)
3 One sort of HRT gets one cross, making you a beastly killer (7)
4 Ghastly hotelier, capital lost, at rock bottom, wanted for fraud (4,5)
5 (see 21)
6 Women have been controversially turning on dear Di (8)
8 Architect of local government scandal (7)
14 Journalist sap swallows Duchess's opening: 'It's not been tried yet' (3,6)
15 Nothing in Chunnel moving due to blow-out (8)
17 No longer getting sex by credit card? Here's a way out (4,4)
18 Cries of 'Socialist leader puts it on thick!' (7)
20 Faldo no Atherton at heart, being bound to respond honestly (2,4)
22 Brenda's people ain't no different! (6)
23 Retreat after second-rate leader (5)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 28.02.97. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 72

Winner: MICHAEL DIXON

ACROSS: 8 Kaunda 9 Privates 10 Fellatio 11 (see 12) 12/11/19 Brass monkey weather 14 Primaries 16 Scumbag 17 Perfidy 20 Fan dancer 22 Scams 24 Addict 25 The Iliad 27 Lingerie 28 Puffin.

DOWN: 1/26 Kate Adie 2 Uncle Sam 3 (see 7) 4 Up yours 5 Dismember 6 Wagner 7/3 Referendum Party 13 Richard III 15 Barnstorm 18 Face-lift 19 (see 12) 21 Doings 23 Tempo 26 (see 1).

EXCLUSIVE TO ALL TORY NEWSPAPERS

GERMANY COMPLETELY WASHED UP

Yesterday in Bonn

by Our Political Staff **Frank Furt and Sir Isaiah Berlin**

A ONCE-proud nation, the economic miracle of Europe, now lies in ruins, writes our man at Wapping taking dictation from Conservative Central Office.

From Munich to Dusseldorf, from Stuttgart to Helsinki *(Get a map. Ed.)* the story is the same.

Starving toddlers roam the autobahns pitifully begging for scraps of apple strudel and liverwurst from the Turkish immigrants.

Giant rats escaping from the sewers devour the unburied corpses of the unemployed as pensioners wheel barrowloads of worthless deutschmarks to the empty sausage shops.

The once-great Bundesbank is now a dosshouse.

Yes, make no mistake, Herr Kohl's Germany is Alles Über or, to put it in plain English, All Over.

The German man in the strasse now looks with hungry eye towards Britain's Economic Miracle where our flourishing industries are the envy of the world.

Said one businessman, Herr Hans Madeupname: "If only we had a Prime Minister like your John Major I would not have to eat my children and sell my wife into prostitution to stay alive."

NEW HOWARD PLAN – AN END TO TRADITIONAL 'RIGHT TO JUSTICE'

by Our Legal Staff **Joshua Rosenkrantz**

THE Home Secretary last night announced a controversial new plan "to speed up the judicial process".

Under his proposed scheme anyone arrested would immediately be sent to prison with a mandatory fixed sentence, ie life.

Mr Howard said: "This would help enormously with the backlog of cases in the courts and save the taxpayer millions of pounds. It would also send a clear message to the criminals on our streets, as well as the potential criminals and the non-criminals."

Howard's End

The move has met with some opposition from lawyers. Said one leading QC: "It is against our whole tradition of Habeas Enormos Fees, enshrined in the Magna Profit of 1448."

But last night Mr Howard was adamant.

"This Bill will not have the effect that everyone fears because this government is not going to get back in and it will never happen."

LATE NEWS

There was further controversy when Mr Howard announced a list of new prisons to accommodate the "slight rise in the prison population to about 20 million".

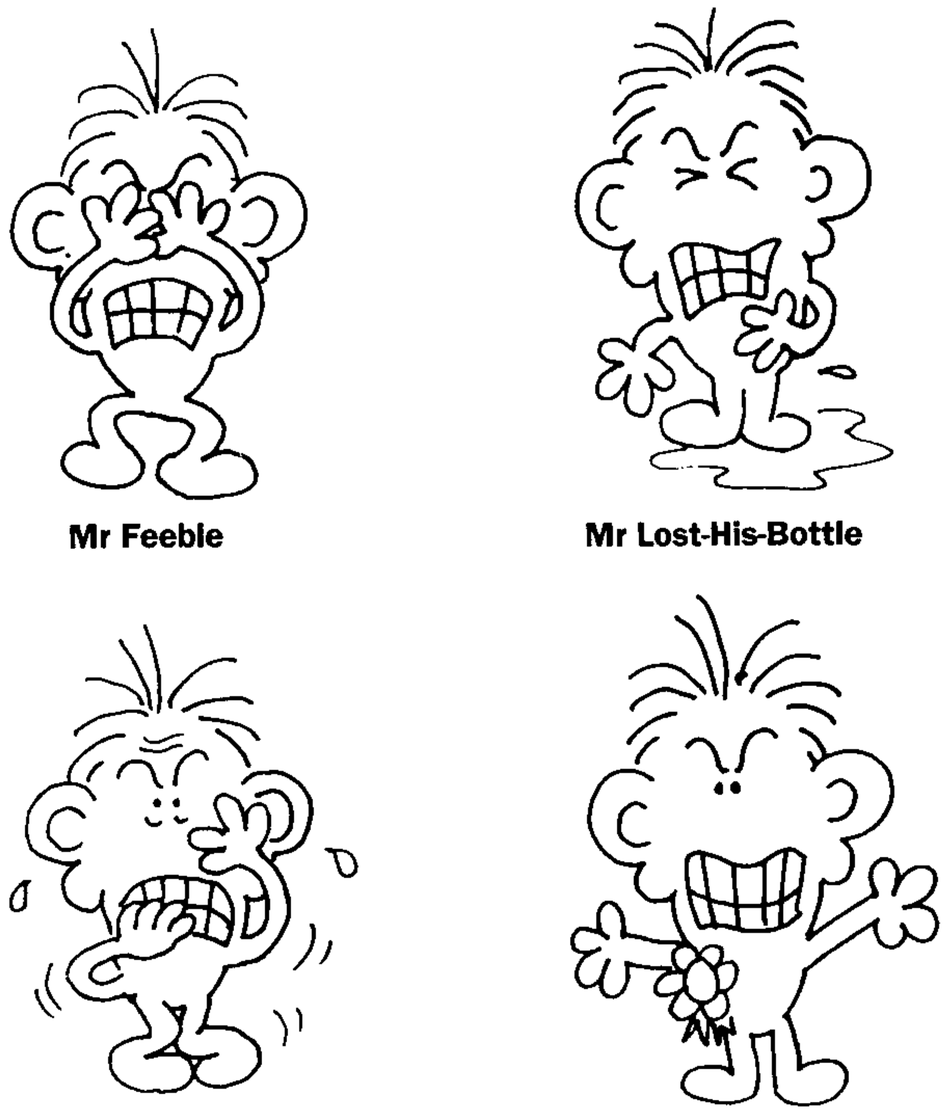
The following buildings will become prisons as from May 1st:

- **The Albert Hall**
- **St Thomas' Hospital**
- **Broadcasting House (Portland Place)**
- **Buckingham Palace (summer only)**
- **The Post Office Tower**
- **Tottenham Court Road Tube Station (Northern Line)**
- **HMS Britannia**
- **Liverpool**

(That's enough prisons. Ed. No, it isn't. Howard.)

THE MR MEN

(as not seen on the hoardings)



Mr Feeble

Mr Lost-His-Bottle

Mr Trying-To-Look-Statesmanlike

Mr Conservative

Peggy Ashcroft's Lovers In Full

(continued from page one)

Sir Herbert Beerbohm-Tree; Mahatma Gandhi; Lytton Strachey; Laurel and Hardy; Gilbert and George; Gilbert and Sullivan; Take That; Sir Peregrine Worsthorne; Cecil Rhodes; Michael Foot; Sir John Gielguid; Sir Ian McKellen; Sir Kenneth Branagh; Terry Thomas; Damien Hirst; Sir John Harvey-Jones; W.G. Grace. *(That's enough lovers. Ed. No it's not. The Late Dame Peggy)*

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

I am still keeping everyone guessing about when I am going to hold my election — including myself! The options are:

1. May 1. The advantage of this is that we can carry on as long as possible showing the country how well we are governing. Also it will give the maximum time for the feel-good factor to trickle down to the grass roots.
2. There are no other options.

Already there are signs that our fortunes are turning. Not that they needed turning. Oh no. But this morning Mr Dr Mawhinney burst into my bedroom screaming: "Just look at this, John," in his funny Irish voice. He was holding up a copy of the *Daily Telegraph* with the headline "Glimmer Of Hope For Major As Labour Lead Slips To 31 Per Cent". He was very excited and said: "You see, John, my new poster campaign is working — the one showing the lion crying as it sees that Mr Blair's decision to sign up to the European social chapter could cause substantial job losses". I had to tell Mr Dr Mawhinney that this was of course my idea, along with the slogan "New Labour, New Seekers" (this is my wife Norman's favourite singing group, especially the track "The Carnival Is Over", which for some reason she has been singing quite a lot recently).

Tuesday

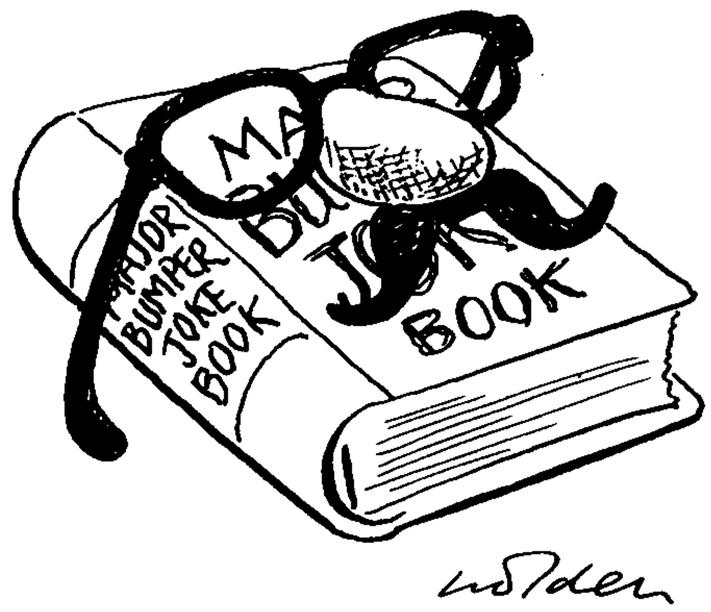
There is tremendous news from Germany, where the number of unemployed has now reached the highest level since Hitler. I have no wish to gloat over poor Herr Kohl's misfortunes, especially now that he is ill. But nevertheless it is hard not to. Ha, ha, ha, ha.

Wednesday

We had a big argument in our Cabinet meeting today about whether there should be more jokes in my speeches. Mr Portaloo said he thought they were quite funny already, which was kind of him. But of course he is foreign and perhaps does not understand our English sense of humour. Everyone was then asked to write down a joke. Mr Clarke started to giggle uncontrollably, but all he had written down were the words "John Major". He clearly had other things on his mind, like his battle with Mr Eddie George about whether to put interest rates up by an eighth of one percent.

Thursday

Tonight is a very historic night, when we are having a huge fund-raising dinner-dance at the Dorchester Hotel. Some of the most important people in the country are going to be there including Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, Lord Lord-Webber and Lord Sir David Frost.



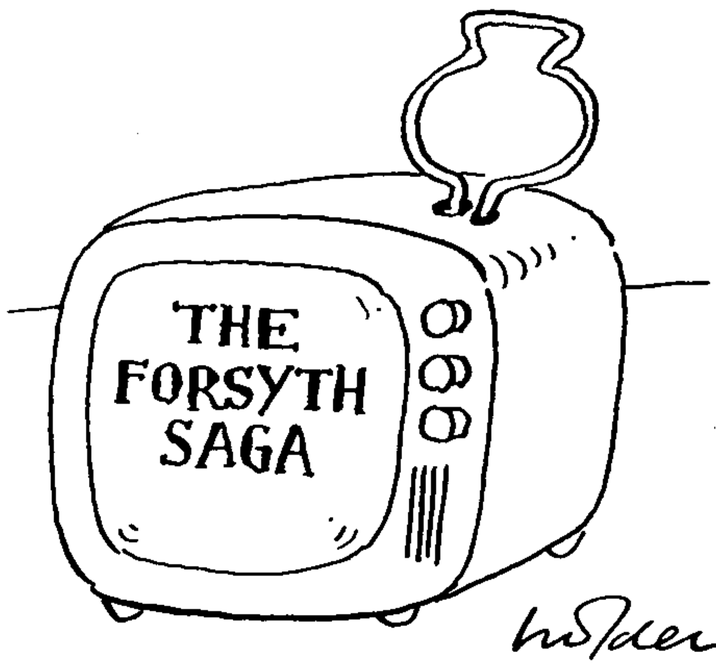
The idea of the evening was to raise as much money as possible so that we can win the election. Lord Archer held an auction of very important items belonging to famous people. The lots were as follows:

1. 1 Old Etonian tie belonging to Lord Archer.
2. 1 pair Hush Puppies, slightly scuffed, belonging to Mr Clarke.
3. 1 set electric hair rollers, one missing, needs plug, the property of Mrs Bottomley.
4. 1 All Souls College Oxford 1st VIII rowing scarf, presented by Lord Archer.
5. 1 England rugby jersey, as worn at various Twickenham internationals by Lord Archer.

But I am delighted to say that, despite all this competition, easily the highest price of the night was fetched by Lot 6, a book by my wife Norman entitled "Farewell To Chequers", inscribed by the author with the words "The Carnival Is Over — best wishes Norman Major", which was bought by an Asian gentleman Mr Masif Bakhandha, who paid £2 million and asked me when he would be getting his peerage.

Friday

I have decided to show everybody that I can be very tough if I want to be. I am sorry to say that Mr Dorrell has made a not inconsiderable mistake in my judgement, which is the only judgement that matters. He made a speech saying that if Mr Blair let the Scots have their own parliament, we would take it away again. Mr Dorrell is wrong on two counts. First of all, there



will not be a Scottish parliament because Mr Blair will never be elected. Secondly, when Mr Blair is elected, which he will not be, we will wait and see what our policy on Scotland should be, until we decide to sell off the whole country to Stagecoach plc.

I have therefore dismissed Mr Dorrell from his very important job as Constitutional Spokesman. "And furthermore," I told him, "as a punishment for your blunder, I am not going to let you go on television during the election putting the Government's case."

"Thank you very much, Prime Minister," he said. "It's more than I deserve."

Monday

Tonight Mr Blair will look a complete idiot. He has forced a vote in the House of Commons to try and humiliate my friend Mr Hogg who helped me win the Beef War. Which I did. Oh yes.

He is claiming that I have done a deal with Mr Trimble to win the vote. I have not even seen Mr Trimble except for this morning when I happened to bump into him in my office. He mentioned in passing that he and his friends would vote for me so long as we made sure that their farmers did not lose out over the mad cows. I said that there would be no horse-trading but that cow-trading was something very different.

Saturday

My friend Sir Lord Webber has shown again how loyal he is. He says that if Mr Blair wins the election he will go and live abroad rather than pay any taxes.

"When shall I start packing then?" asked Norman — as usual missing the point of Sir Lord Lloyd's patriotic gesture.

EXCLUSIVE

WE REVEAL BUSTY MELINDA'S ARTIFICIALLY ENHANCED FIGURE!

by Daily Telegraph Staff **Charles Corrrr**

DID SHE or didn't she? At last the truth can be told! Gorgeous Page 3 (of the Telegraph) girl Melinda Messenger DID artificially pump up newspaper circulations!

Readers of the renamed "Daily Melegraph!" may have thought that the enormous stories about Mel were genuine news — but they weren't! They were falsies!

Shoot the Messenger! Geddit??!!

BARB Job

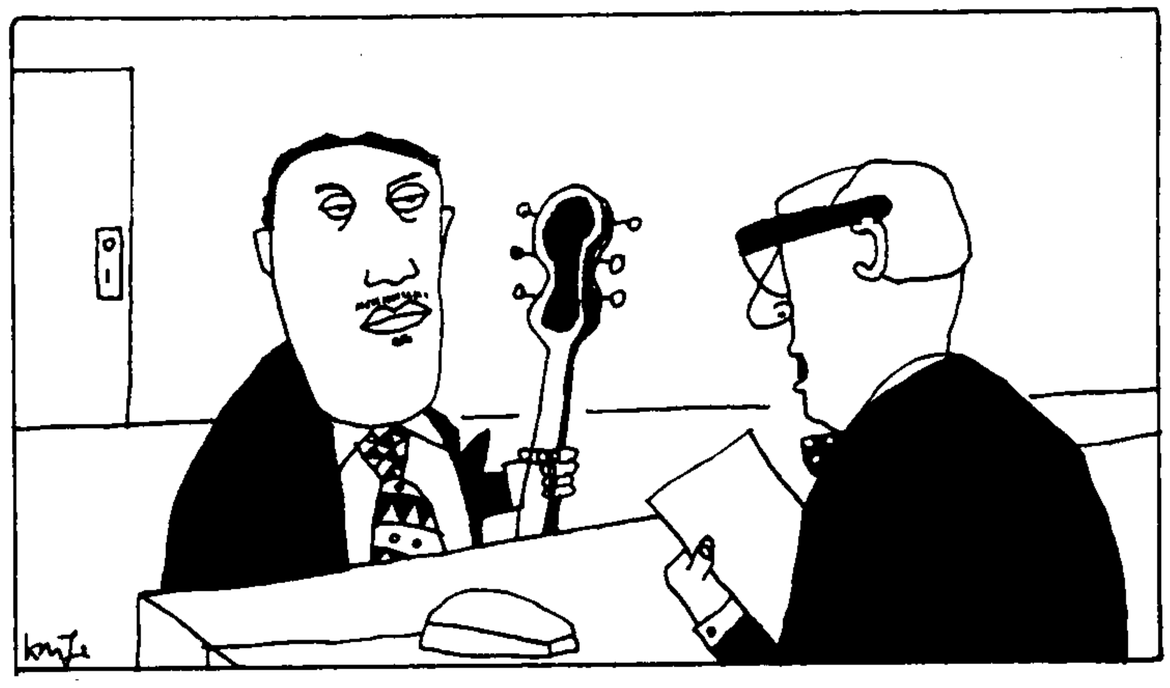
The stories were not real features at all — they were just implanted into the paper to improve the Daily Tel's vital statistics!

Silly Con

Without Busty Mel's assets we would have had figures of a flat 900,000 sales a day — as opposed to the eye-popping 1.2 million actually recorded!!

Keep looking, fellas! Who says we're making a complete Mess-enger of this paper!

The Daily Melegraph Read All About Tits!



"It's an impressive CV, Mr McNaughton... but Tishman Securities really doesn't need a bluesman at the present moment"

WEDDING OF YEAR CALLED OFF

by Our Showbiz Staff **Paddy Tout**

BRITAIN's most famous couple have decided to abandon their plans to wed, blaming the media for exerting too much pressure on them.

The marriage was expected at any day and it was rumoured that the service had already been booked at one of London's swankiest showbiz venues, St Paul's Cathedral, with a reception afterwards at top celebrity haunt Buckingham Palace.

Champagne Super Darling

However, the would-be groom, Charles, one of the notorious Windsor brothers, has had second thoughts about marrying the blonde divorcée whom he has been seeing for the last 25 years.

Charles, the frontman for the unpopular supergroup The Royal Family, is renowned for sounding off in public and has repeatedly been in trouble for bad-mouthing architects and senior members of the Church of England.

His girlfriend, Camilla, has had a string of previous relationships with members of other bands such as The Aristocracy, but this time was believed to be totally committed to settling down.

Patsy Kensington

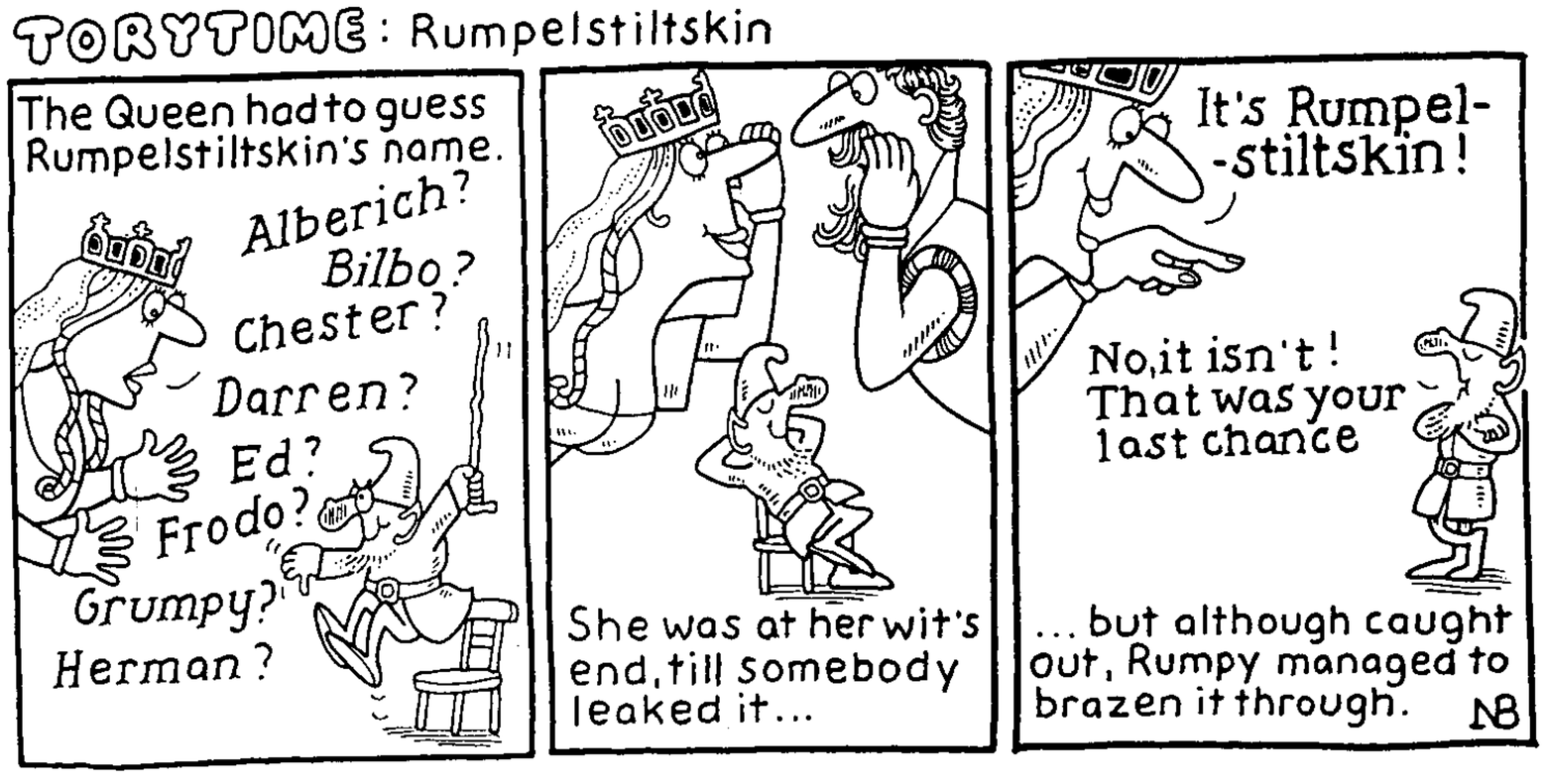
Fans were disappointed by the news. "If only they would go ahead and get married then maybe the group would split up and we would not hear any more about them."

The row erupted when the FA received a fax from the European governing body, saying it "had already committed itself to supporting Germany".

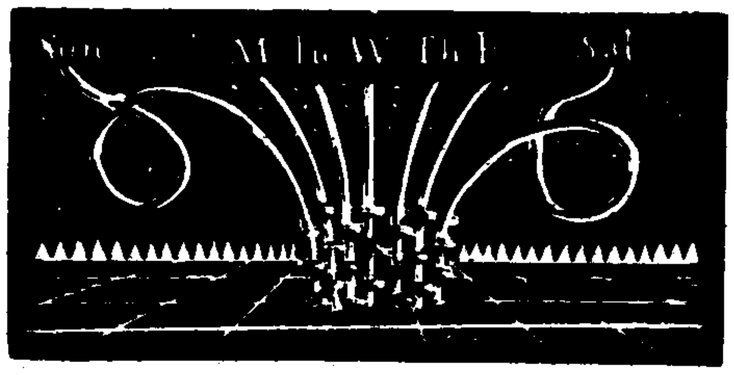
The fax was signed by general secretary Gerd Aigner, coincidentally a German.

Fritz Ahlstrom, UEFA spokesman, denied accusations of bias last night. He said: "There is nothing in the fact that he happens to be German. When he signed the fax he was only obeying orders."

Daily Express



DIARY



ALAN WATNEYS

I recently acquired a new piece of technology called a "fountain pen". Like so many modern inventions, it was supplied without any proper instructions for its use. It worked perfectly well for a week or two, but then mysteriously stopped, making no mark on the paper at all. I rang the makers who reluctantly sent round an engineer who, after examining the instrument for several seconds, said: "This pen's got no ink in it." When I asked him to fill it up, he for some reason took offence and called me "a stupid old fool". Is this what we have come to expect from Mr Major's so-called classless Britain?

I owe my readers an apology. When I described the Battle of Hastings as having taken place in 1966, I should of course have said 1923. I cannot think how this error came about, unless it be that my new fountain pen has not been correctly programmed.

As the great F.W. Voletrouser once observed: "We are more likely to read pompous, fogeyish drivel in the pages of the Spectator than in any other magazine in Britain." Who am I to disagree?

ON OTHER PAGES IN THE SPECTATOR

The Dumbing Down Of The Spectator, by Petronella Why-Oh-Why-Have I Been Given A Job

Down With The Darkies by Brute Anderson

Why Is Everyone So Bloody Rude And Red-Faced These Days? by Paul Johnson

BLIND DATE LOSER COULDN'T MAKE UP MIND

by Our Political Staff **Cilla Blackrod**

A DITHERING contestant was left looking like a complete idiot last night when he failed to choose any of the dates on offer to him.

The soon-to-be-unemployed Johnnie Major from Brixton asked each of the dates whether choosing them would lead to winning the election.

Date Number One, attractive March 20th, replied: "If you choose me your poll is sure to sink!"

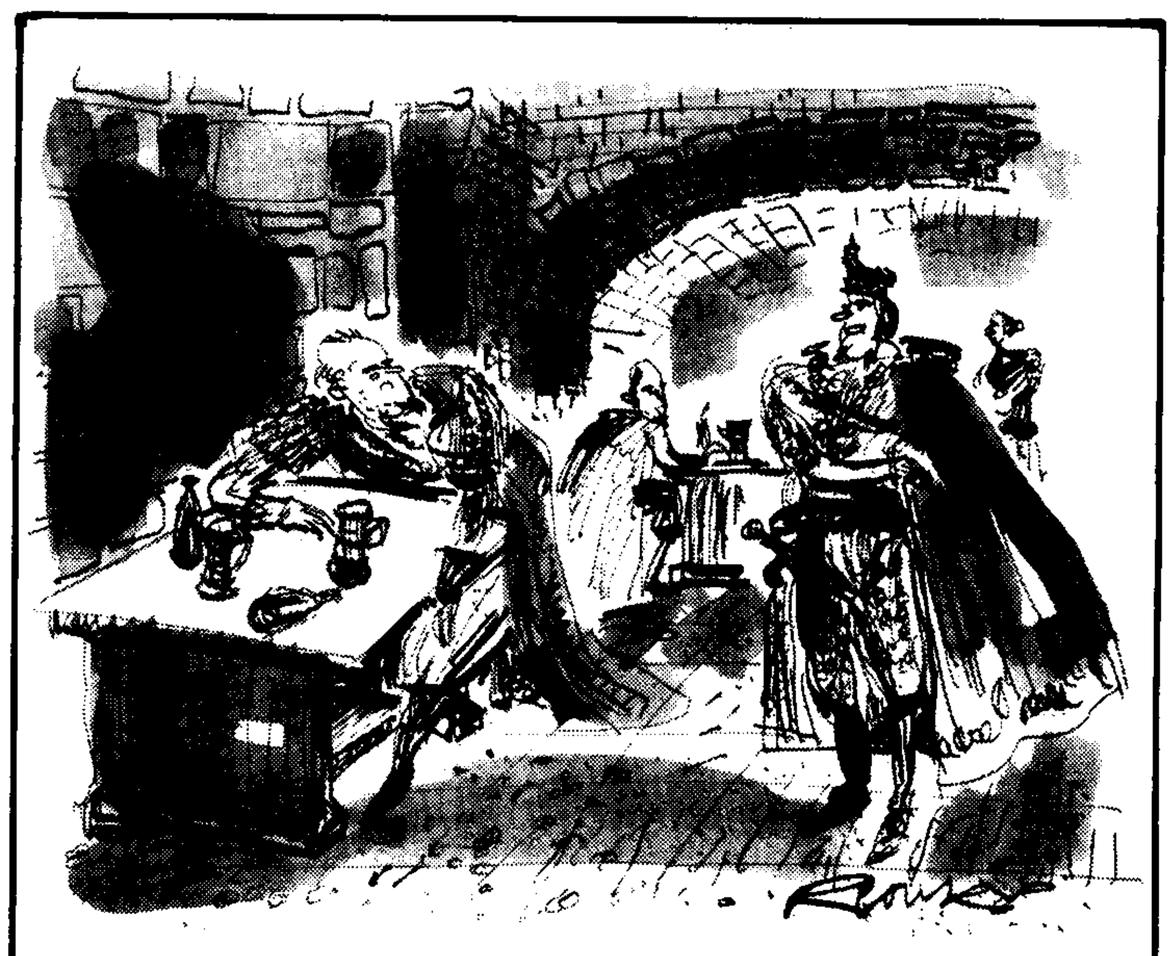
Date Number Two, appealing May 1st, said: "Choose me and I'll give you a very painful election indeed!"

Finally, Date Number Three, the unfancied May 8th, told the loveless failure "You won't get in with me, matey!"

Lorra Lorra Losses

When Cilla asked sad John to choose his dream date, all the retiring former bank clerk would say was: "I have not confirmed which of the dates I will choose and I will decide in the fullness of time dependent on the circumstances."

The audience roared with laughter and Cilla asked him *not* to come back next week.



"John Falstaff — it's me, the piss-artist formerly known as Prince Hal"

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam: Lines Written On The Death Of Pamela Harriman 1872-1997

So. Farewell
Then Pamella
Bordes *(surely 'Harriman'? Ed).*
Courtesan extraordinaire.

You were "linked"
To almost
Every famous man
Of this century.

It says on your tombstone
"Now she is sleeping".
But it does not say
Who with.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94. A Service Of Induction For A Lady Priest As Canoness-Prebend Of St Paula's Cathedral

President *(the Dean, for it is he)*: Brothers and Sisters, we are gathered here together to induct our sister Lucy Twinkey as a fully-qualified Canoness and Lady Prebenderette of this cathedral. If anyone present knows of any just cause or impediment why this woman should not be on the front page of the Times tomorrow morning, let them squeak now or forever hold their handbags.

All: We object.

President: On what grounds?

All: She's a woman, you fool!

(There will then be a reading from the feminist bible, Good News For Modern Woman)

"And Jesus chose unto himself twelve apostles who were all men, which was typical of the phallocentric tyranny of those times, And he said unto them: "Verily, I say unto you, by the year 2000, things will be very different. Mark my words." Here ends the reading.

RESPONSES

President: Why art thou all leaving?

All: Because we have had it up to here with these ghastly women.

President: You're not really going to go, are you?

All: Yes, we jolly well are.

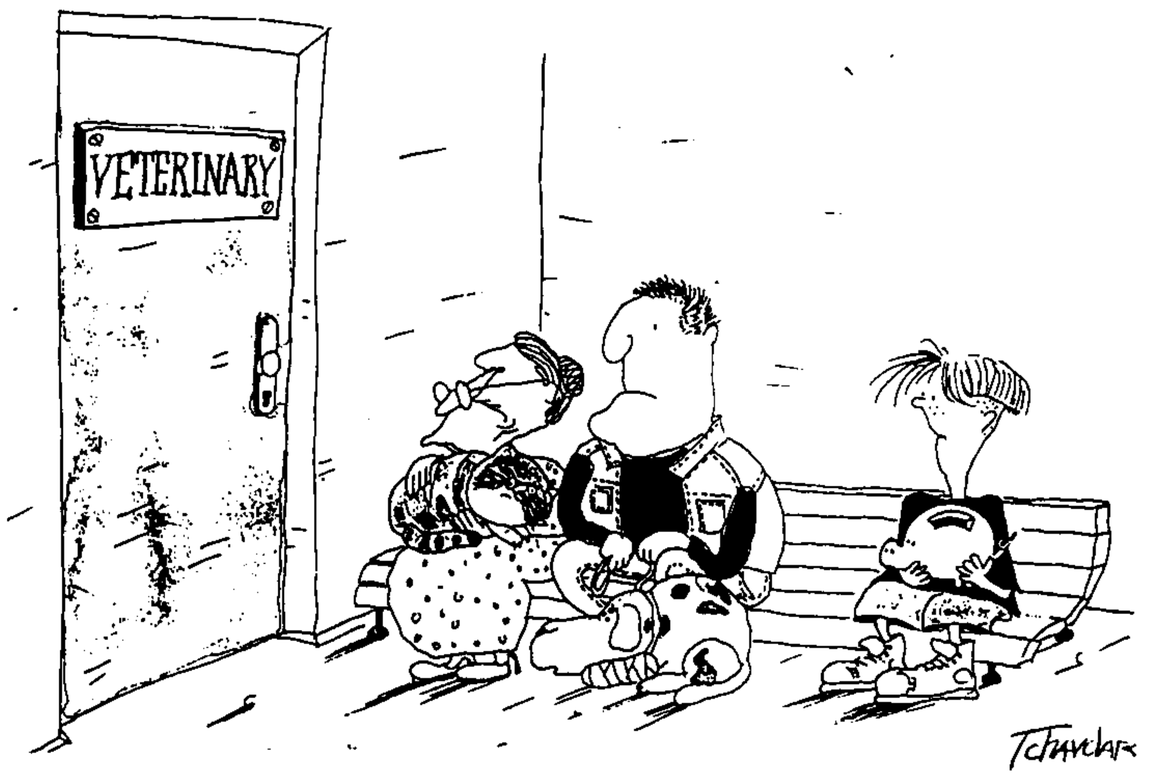
President: Let us pray.

All: No, we're off.

(At this point the rest of the canons shall process out in an orderly queeny huff. Then the newly-inducted Canoness Twinkey shall lead what remains of the congregation in the following chorus from the Frank Sinatra Hymn Book accompanied by herself on the guitar)

Rev. Twinky: She's not too hungry for Communion at 8.
She loves her Matins, and never comes late.
She believes in forgiveness, for people she hates.
That's why the lady is a priest.
© Rodgers and Sacred Hart.

All (Verger): Amen.



LATE NEWS

FOOTBALLERS CHARGED WITH 'MATCH-WINNING'

A GROUP of Italian footballers are to be charged following allegations that they deliberately won a match played against England at Wembley.

A spokesman for the English FA commented: "There is very clear evidence here that the Italian side fixed us good and proper, and threw us out of the World Cup. This was clearly unfair, and we will be spending the next month studying video evidence to find the time we last scored a goal. I bet £1,000 with a Malaysian businessman we don't find it for 541 minutes — approximately."

THE SUN

Bullshit ON THE BOX

SO, THEY are going to sack Linsey from the Street. I've got a message for the bosses at Granada. I'd like to get her in the sack!

NOSTROMO? Nostromosexual more like it with all those foreigners poncing about. It's time for the BBC to clean up its act.

EASTENDERS is supposed to be realistic. So how come all the blacks don't get arrested for nicking your videos? Mind you, that Sharma in the drycleaners is a cracker. I wouldn't mind a tumble in the dryer with her!

DO YOU want to know who I fancy most in Brookside? Sharon or Lynne or the new one, Mandy? Answer: none of them. I want all of them at once! Corrr!

BRITAIN's top television critic returns with another in-depth look at the medium only in tomorrow's Sun.

Celeb

LIGGER

ITS A FUNNY THING FATHERHOOD, TROY. YOUR FONDEST MEMORIES ABOUT YOUR KIDS ARE THE SILLY CHILDISH THINGS...
I MEAN, HERE YOU ARE, FOLLOWING IN MY FOOTSTEPS, TRYING TO FORGE A CAREER AS A CREATIVE ARTIST... AND GOOD LUCK TO YOU...
BUT I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY YOU FIRST WALKED. THAT WAS A VERY EMOTIONAL MOMENT FOR ME.
YEAH.
I WAS COMPLETELY PISSED YOU KNOW, DAD...
TROY BLOKE STORMS OFF CHAT SHOW SHOCK
GOOD ON YOU SON. I'M VERY PROUD.

BIRT UNVEILS NEW-LOOK BBC NEWS

by Our Media Staff **Phil Space**

MR JOHN Birt, the director-general of the BBC, yesterday announced another huge shake-up of the Corporation's news output, following the one he announced last week.

In response to a £250 million marketing survey, conducted with the aid of 7,500 "focus groups" in 12 sub-regions of the country, Mr Birt said: "BBC News has become a minority enclave of middle-aged, middle-class, white attitudes which no longer represent the views of more than 90 per cent of our audience.

"What the BBC must do is to appeal to a much younger audience, particularly those who are not interested in news."

What You Will See In The New-Look BBC News

● *Bong!*

Chris Evans *(for it is he):* Hi kids.

● *Bong!*

Evans: This is the news, OK? Telling it like it is.

● *Bong!*

Evans: Right. Honk if you're watching. Bonk if you're not.

● *Bonk!*

Evans: And now... the Spice Girls.

(There follows a video of certain female young persons cavorting to the sound of raucous music)

Evans: Great. And now the weather, right? Over to Gazza in the weather studio.

(Man with dyed blond hair is discovered seated drunk in a dentist's chair)

Gazza: Burp!

Evans: Great. And now some late news. I want more money or I'm not doing this any more.

Continuity: And now on BBC-1, *Panorama* looks at the new Spice Girls video. And later on *Newsnight,* Jeremy Paxman interviews Patsy Kensit...

Apparently... BY MIKE BARFIELD

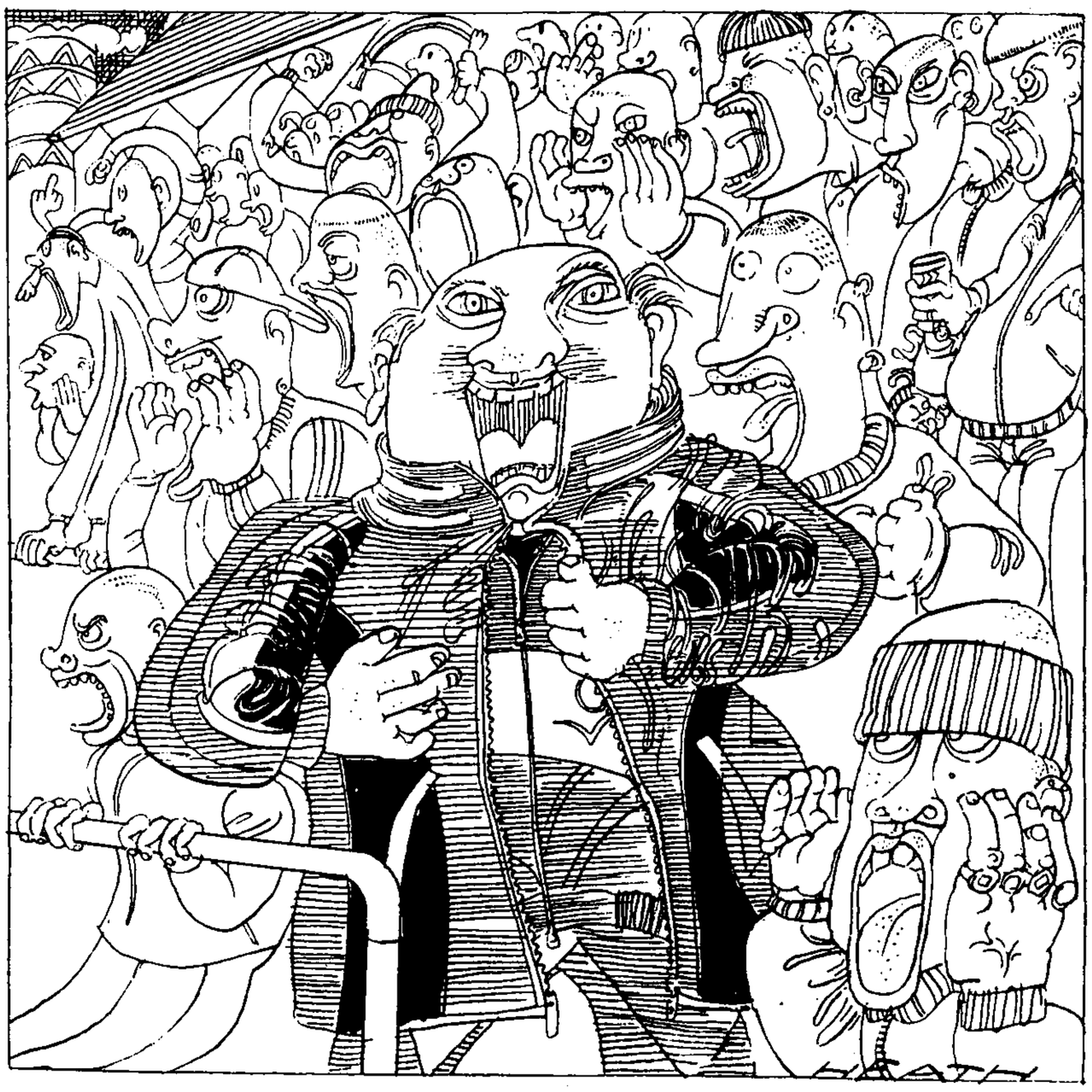
INTERNET ABBREVIATIONS EXPLAINED

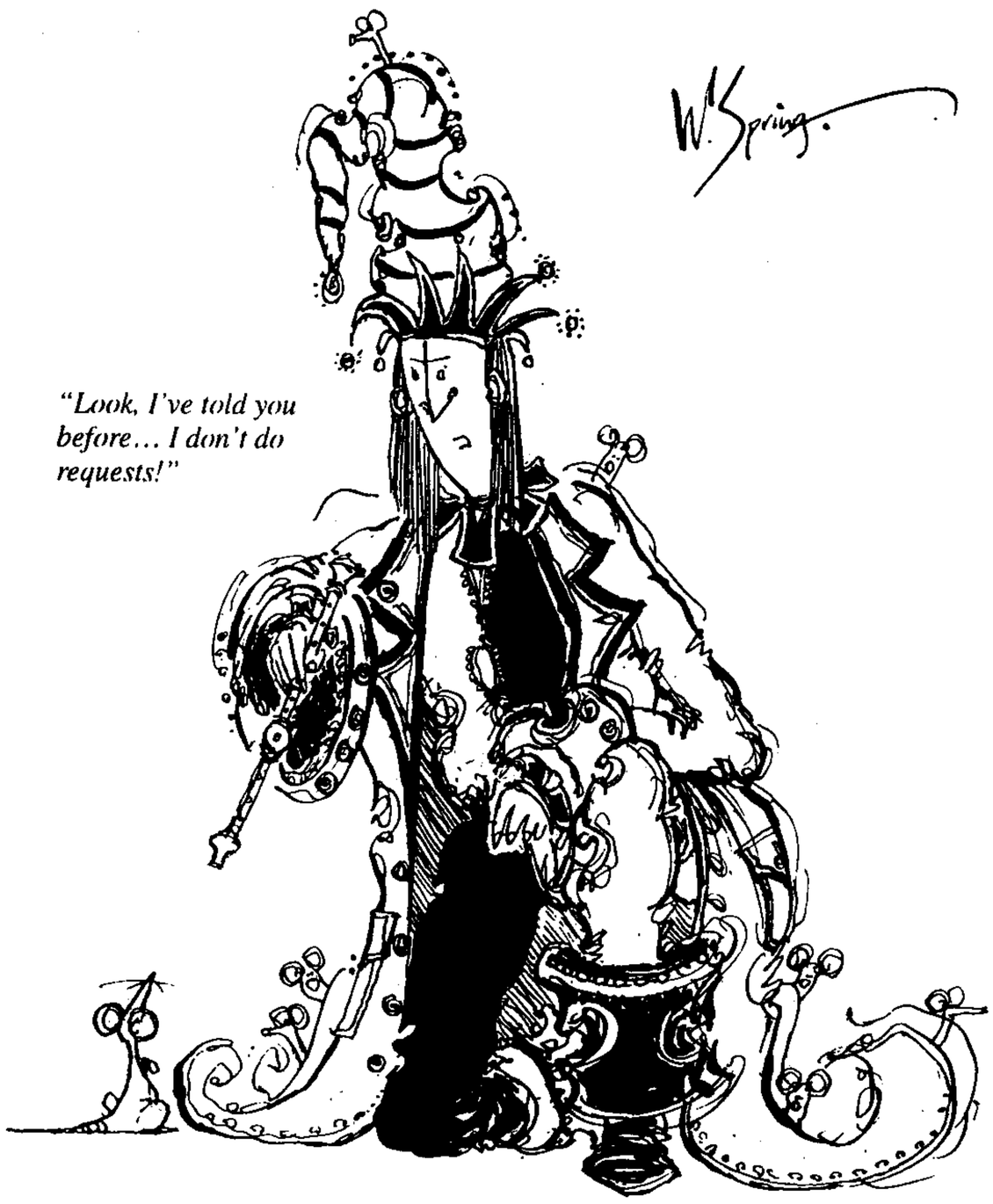
:-) SAD MAN	:-(VERY SAD MAN	;-) NO GIRLFRIEND
:-I RARELY SEES DAYLIGHT	%-I HAS BEARD	%-\ OWNS FULL SET OF X-FILES VIDEOS
%*} PAMMI POSTER ON BEDROOM WALL	%-(PERSONAL HYGIENE PROBLEMS	%-(0) LIVES WITH MOTHER
I-(NOW BELIEVES C.I.A. ALTERED HIS EXAM RESULTS	I-P RECENTLY DOWN-LOADED BOMB-MAKING RECIPES	$$$$$ BILL GATES'S BANK BALANCE

The photograph, published in the Guardian, will embarrass the Yard which has consistently urged London's policemen not to join the Masons because of fears that it could lead to allegations of impartiality. *Evening Standard*

Harry Enfield's **Class Bores** Drawn by **Michael Heath** **7. The Joy of Football**

"GOOD SHOT ZOLA! NICE TRY THAT MAN! Oh yah, I've always been a football fan — the drama, the singing, the crowd scenes, I mean it's just like opera only more expensive. I've been coming to Stamford Bridge for years, two years in fact since we sold up the weekend cottage in Gloucestershire I mean it was a nice idea but the drive was just that little bit too far — but weekends in London are so much more fun Camilla goes to Harvey Nicks with a chum & I come to the footy — TWO FOUR SIX EIGHT WHO DO WE APPRECIATE? CHELSEA! I mean one really gets back to one's working class roots and there's such a tremendous sense of camaraderie in the corporate boxes OI REF! NO WAY WAS THAT OFFSIDE YOU ROTTEN EGG! I've always been a Chelsea man since two seasons ago — I used to play rugger at school with Matt Harding when he died I cried all day Camilla says I got through a four pack of Man-size I mean it's a tremendous emotional release — OH DO COME ON YOU BLUES! JOLLY IT UP A BIT! Me & some chums have got a long term plan to get a consortium together here at the Bridge to buy out Ken Bates, re-finance on the stock market, launch a hostile takeover of Tottenham & Arsenal & combine all three clubs as London FC with a spanking new indoor all-first-class-seater stadium somewhere a bit more convenient for the City. Bring in Angus Deayton as non-executive Chairman. Yes, I'm a Blues man through & through TRA-LA-LA! TRA-LA-LA! THE MAN WE LOVE IS GIN-O-LA! HURRAH! HURRAH! HURRAH! My little bro' was at Cambridge with David Baddiel..."





"Look, I've told you before... I don't do requests!"

TIME FOR LONGFORD TO BE RELEASED says everybody

by Our Crime Staff **Charles Moores-Murders**

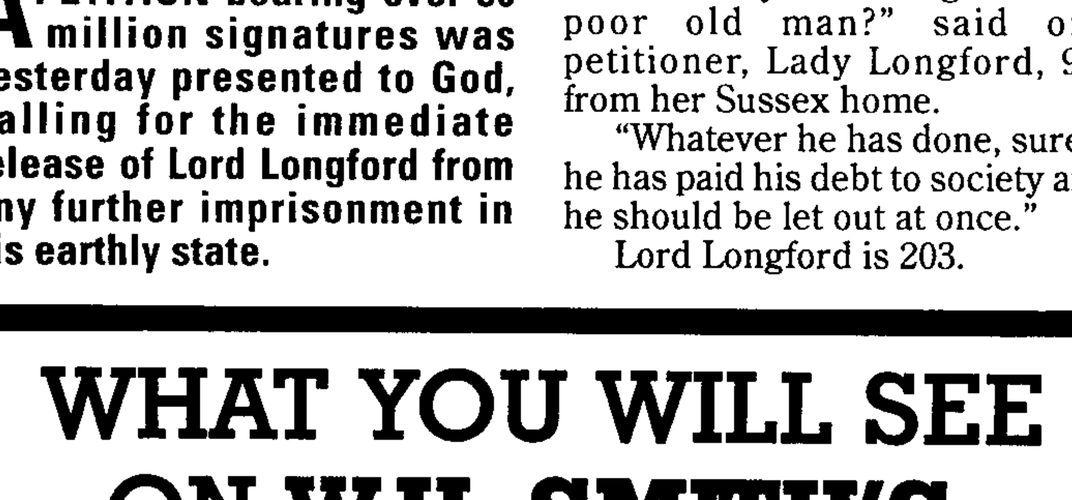
A PETITION bearing over 30 million signatures was yesterday presented to God, calling for the immediate release of Lord Longford from any further imprisonment in his earthly state.

"Isn't 90 years enough for this poor old man?" said one petitioner, Lady Longford, 94, from her Sussex home.

"Whatever he has done, surely he has paid his debt to society and he should be let out at once."

Lord Longford is 203.

WHAT YOU WILL SEE ON W.H. SMITH'S NEW-LOOK TOP SHELF



W.H. SMUT

(Bill Cockburn prop.)

Britain's leading sandwich shop

From the Referendum Bunker

Bulletin No.94

Achtung!

So, Mr Major-Bond. While you have been dithering over the date of our election, some of us have been busy.

It may interest you to know that while we have been having our amusing little chat, every single household in the country has been penetrated by my deadly newspaper, the Marmite News.

Ten billion copies have gone to every man, woman and fish in the country. Can you match that, Mr Major-Bond? I think not!

(Strokes white fish on lap)

And do not take comfort from the so-called opinion polls which show that I will get no votes in the election.

They are lying. Do you hear me, LYING!

I have personally commissioned my own poll which tells a very different story.

Carla, show Mr Bond the result of our top-secret Marmi poll carried out among a random selection of Old Etonian members of the Referendum Party.

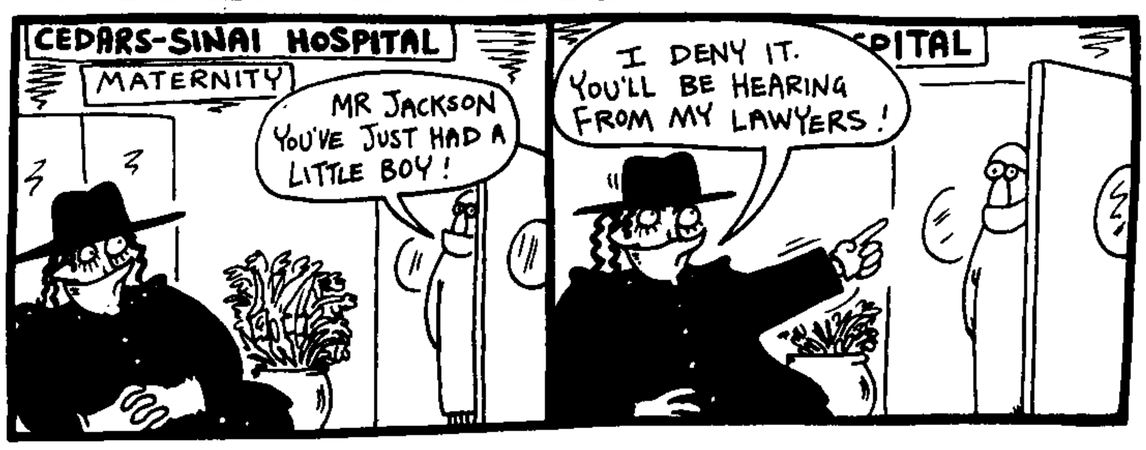
(Enter sultry Italian temptress in zebra-skin bikini)

Carla Powell *(for it is she)*: The result of our opinion powell is as follows: Conservatives (John Major), nul points. Referendum Party (Sir James Goldenwonder), 100 per cent. Referendum Party elected by a landslide.

Goldfinger: You see, you fool! You are doomed! And I still have one final trick up my sleeve, my ultimate secret weapon. May I introduce to you the most terrifying of all my followers, Mr Aspinall.

(Enter half-naked zoo-keeper dressed only in traditional Zulu lion-skin, carrying spear and shield, and accompanied by the following: 3 serial-killer tigers; 2 deadly gorillas; 3 psycho giraffes; 1 poisonous taki and a number of man-eating owls. As Aspinall lets out blood-curdling Zulu war-cry of "Vote For The Referendum Party," he is set on by his own beasts and consumed. Goldfinger emits a cry of rage and disappears down secret underground tunnel to Weston-super-Mare to address mass rally of 3 old age pensioners who want to know whether they will get free hearing aids if Britain joins the Common Market)

SUPERMODELS



ALBANIAN NEWS

Friday, February 21, 1997

PYRAMID SELLING — RIOTS CONTINUE

by Tirana Palmer-Tomkinson

VIOLENCE erupted in the streets of London again today, for the 82nd day running, as millions of angry demonstrators protested that they had been robbed in the notorious Punch-selling scandal which has shocked the entire nation.

Pensioners had been persuaded to part with sums of up to £1.75 in the mistaken belief that, in return, they would receive a humorous magazine.

"We were told that our lives would be enriched," said one despairing subscriber to the scheme. "We thought we would be getting a supply of hilarious jokes which would keep us rolling in the aisles well into old age.

"Instead of which, we got nothing but worthless pieces of paper."

Mahoodwinked

The crowd's anger was directed at the mysterious figure believed to be the brains behind the scam, Mohamed al-Bania, who lives in luxury in the swanky Knightsbridge district of London, where penniless beggars sleep all night on the pavements in the hope of buying a TV set for £10.

A spokesman for the so-called "King of the Pyramids", a Mr Michael Cole, told the world's newsmen: "My client is an honourable businessman who would have nothing to do with any scheme to defraud the public."

ON OTHER PAGES

Unfunny Cartoon by Zog 2

Exclusive serialisation only in Private Eye

Tim Bell's Dark Secret

by Mark Shillingsworth

Part 94

AS THE 'eighties dawned it became more and more obvious that one of the country's leading coke sniffers had become hopelessly addicted to Mrs Thatcher.

"I was at a meeting where I was trying to discuss a drugs deal," recalls a colleague, "and all Tim would talk about was Thatcher. You couldn't stop him. He couldn't get enough of her. Sure, he pretended he could handle it but it was obvious he was hooked."

Jim Bogleby (of Bogleby Hargle and Pratt) took Bell to one side and told him he should seek help with AA (Admen Anonymous).

But Tim denied he had a problem with Thatcher. "I can take a line of Thatcher," he would tell friends, "but I'm not hooked."

But the truth was Bell was driving down to Downing Street in his Flasharati nearly every day for his fix of "Thatch".

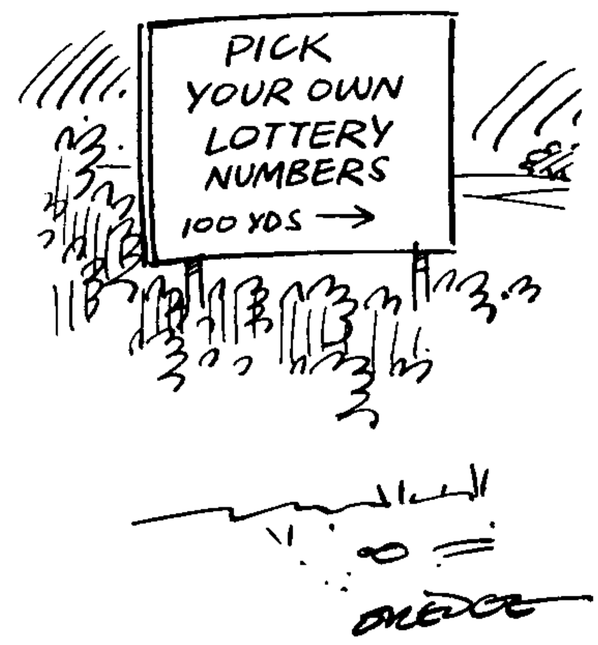
In the end Bell's reputation as a coke-snorting flasher was severely compromised and Tim *(continued page 94)*

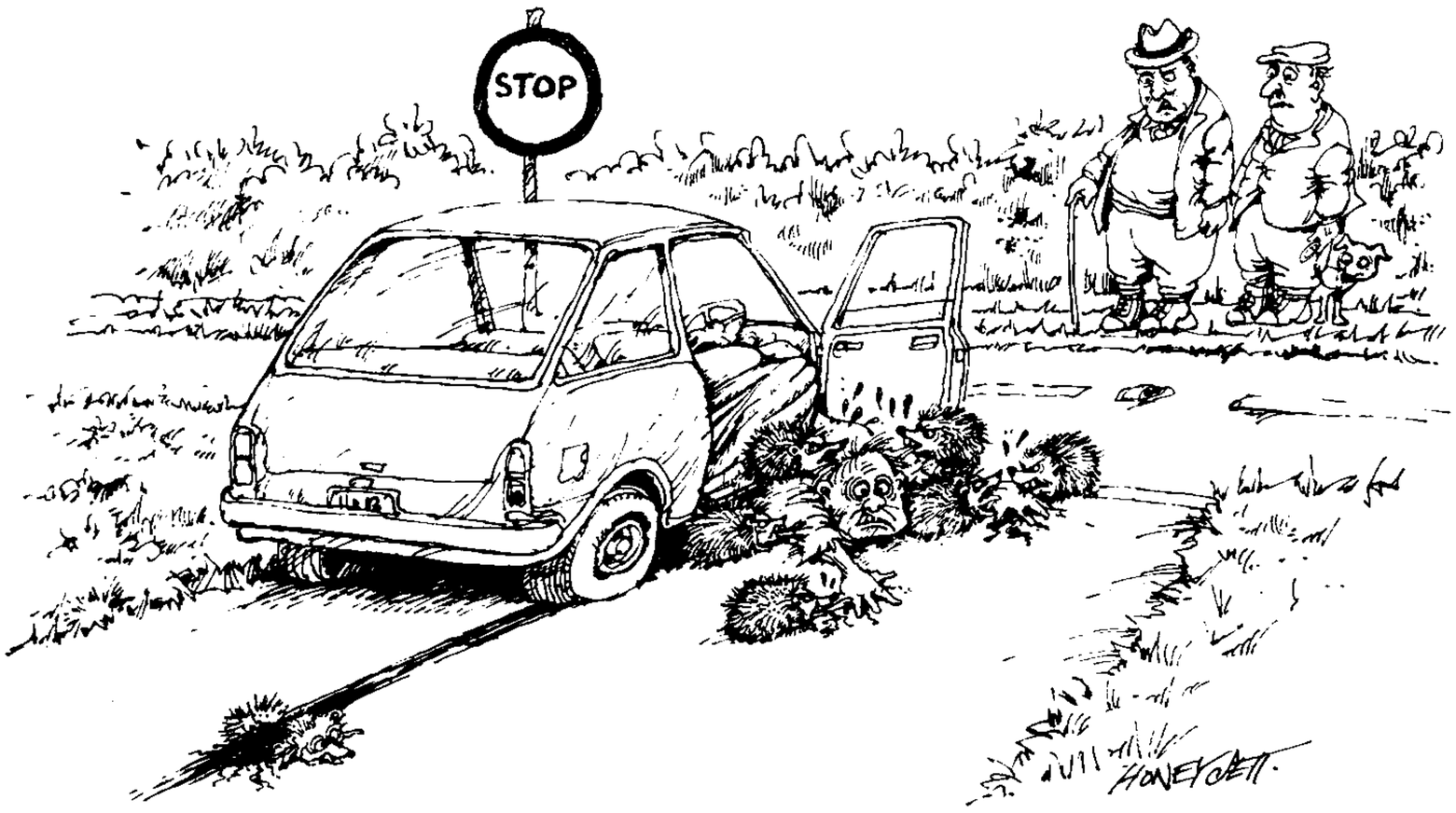
Branarg's Hamlet

Cast in full (3rd hour)

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark . . . . . Kenneth Branarg
Ghost's Father . . . . . Woody Allen
Osric's Brother . . Arnold Schwarzenegger
Yorick's Mother-in-Law . . . . . Ruby Wax
Rosencrantz's Niece . . . Michelle Pfeiffer
Yorick's Dog . . . . . Lassie
2nd Ghost's Sister-in-Law . Roseanne Barr
Fortinbras' Hairdresser . . . O.J. Simpson
Gravediggers' Agent . . . . Danny De Vito
Ophelia's Psychotherapist . . . . . Frasier (from *Frasier*)
People in Danish Hostelry Cast of Cheers

(continued Hour 94)





"I suppose there are the odd occasions when you could say that road rage was justified"

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

EX- FARMER with marital difficulties seeks rural accommodation for himself and black labrador girlfriend. Isolation no problem, reasonable rent: Horsham/ Crawley area. (01403)

West Sussex County Times

33FT. Slumberland divan and mattress, good condition, £20. — Telephone Cheltenham

Gloucester Echo

Literary Review

Money for old dope

Disco Biscuits
Sarah Champion (Ed.)
(Sceptre, £6.99)

DOUBTLESS that *Guardian* feature on English literature's noble tradition of substance abuse has already appeared, but if not, here is a brief synopsis: "Shelley... Laudanum... Heightened consciousness a Romantic ideal blah blah blah... De Quincey... Plangent, crystalline visions... Narcotic experimentation blah blah blah... Aldous Huxley... Mescalin... Alexander Trocchi... Senseless waste of human life blah blah blah... Realities of new urban generation... Irvine Welsh... Methadone addicts... Throwing up in Glasgow tenements..." Yes, I am Will Self and I claim my £500 and an appearance on the *Late Review*.

Of course writers have been getting out of their heads for centuries, and I mean didn't Uncle Jack Kerouac write *On The Road* on sulphate? Sadly, though, the available evidence (rather a large amount) insists that all the great exposés of drug and alcohol misuse — Frederick Exley's chronicle of an American drunk, *A Fan's Notes*, is a fine example — are written from the vantage point of post-experience climb-down. As for books written about drugs by people who are actually on drugs, on the other hand — well, just go back to Uncle Jack and see whether you can get through half-a-dozen pages.

This isn't for a moment to suggest that the 19 contributors to *Disco Biscuits*, billed as "new fiction from the chemical generation", were, er, *doing any stuff* — I believe this is the correct expression — when they indited their darling pieces. That said, it's a credit to their powers of sensory recall that most of the contributions read as if they were composed while in a state of considerable, um, euphoria. You don't believe me? Well, check out Dean Cavanagh's story about a deranged pilot who starts laying down some heavy-duty Jungle in mid-flight; or "Sparrow", some bizarre fragments of nursery rhyme ghetto whimsy (" 'Let's rush 'n' crush dem pussys,' said Mr Big. 'Me nah go out like ah bitch'.") by an immensely cool-sounding dude known only as "Q". No one minds a writer shedding his inhibitions, natch, but most of us would like to hang on to our judgement.

This being minority culture, the key word is jargon. No freemason, licensed insolvency practitioner or Old Etonian was ever quite so proud of the impenetrable shorthand governing his daily life as the *Disco Biscuits* crowd. This is the kind of work whose protagonists inquire of one another "Are we gonna go and blag some whizz or what?", note ruefully that "We had to cane all the charlie before it sweated up". "The vibe was perfect: underground and mellow," the narrator of Charlie Hall's "The Box" deposes. "The boys on the gate were super-chilled and you could puff if it was done discreetly."

Elsewhere, a variety of fashionable attitudes get struck, from faintly complacent *fin de siècle* romanticism ("And I know that Johnny, too, is half in love with the idea that these are the last days, that none of it matters and we can just play out forever") to E as salvation of the labouring classes ("For hundreds of years the likes of Danny and the likes of me and you, rarely experienced joy in their life. They grafted then they died early — from disease, childbirth, war and plain poverty. Most people, even as we leave the twentieth century, can make little of their lives except make do and mend. So thank heaven for the pills.") to the edgy sentimentality of Douglas Rushkoff's "The Snow That Killed Manuel Jarrow", which records the uncannily articulate reflections of a dying dancefloor casualty.

How on earth does this kind of stuff wander into print, or — on a wider level — get so lavishly written up and talked about? The fact is, media gazers, that drugs are terribly politically correct these days, and the moral outrage that cordons off a wife-beater or a child abuser rarely extends to a literary aspirant with sherbet up his nose. Much of the blame for this, one fears, can be laid at the door of Sarah Champion's star "name", the acid generation's Ken Kesey, Uncle Irvine Welsh, who once again (in a grotesque tale about overdoses, sex, death and violence called "The State Of The Party") demonstrates that he could be quite a good writer if he *just cut out all that drugs crap*.

"Oh no! Junkie mail!"

As for the rest, it's a cruel irony that perhaps the best piece in the book, Jonathan Brook's "Sangria", should be a chilling antidote to all the peace and lurv tosh — drugs are there for villains to make money out of and idiots to soften their brains with, the narrator decides, before he gets thrown over a cliff. For all this note of caution, it's good to see that *Disco Biscuits* also harbours some reel laffs. Unhappily, most of these (Sample: "Born in Kent. Educated in the fuck-up system they call private education.") appear among the contributors' biographies.

Books & Bookmen

☐ **THERE's precious little humour in publishing these days, but the revelation that a lowly accounts person at Viking Penguin in the States was, of her own volition, granting booksellers 5 percent additional discount if they paid their bills in 60 rather than 90 days, is a bit of a giggle.**

Nevertheless, this misadventure may assume the proportions of a major scandal and result in a scramble by other conglomerates to acquire Penguin from proprietors Pearson.

■ WHEN Macmillan bought television tie-in publisher Boxtree last summer, it appointed Boxtree founder Sarah Mahaffy as managing director of the Pan Macmillan division. The appointment turned out to be a disastrous mistake: Mahaffy's bluff management style and rigid view of publishing did not go down well with her new colleagues.

At first she failed to realise she would be the loser of battles of wills with those who, like Macmillan General Books MD Ian Chapman, were in theory their subordinates. Then the truth dawned and she softened her approach; but it was too late. Desperate, she took a Nicola Horlick-style flight to Germany to get Macmillan's owner Holtzbrinck to give her their support. They declined. She had not been back in London for long before she was told to clear her desk.

Having won this battle, Ian Chapman is preparing to work with the redoubtable Clare Alexander. Staff at Eccleston Place are fastening their seatbelts.

☐ *THE bloodletting at Penguin UK continues. Not only has Luigi Bonomi been let go, but the fatuously misconceived list he ran, Signet, will be discontinued. It did seem ridiculous that mighty Penguin should have had to create a downmarket imprint to publish stuff that was too vulgar for, er, highbrow, posh Penguin.*

Hamish Hamilton is going to revert to being the literary imprint of the group. Maybe Peter "Eeyore" Straus will be persuaded back from the States to run it. Or it could go to undesigner stubbled Nicholas Pearson, slightly languishing at Nibbie publishers of the year, 4th Estate.

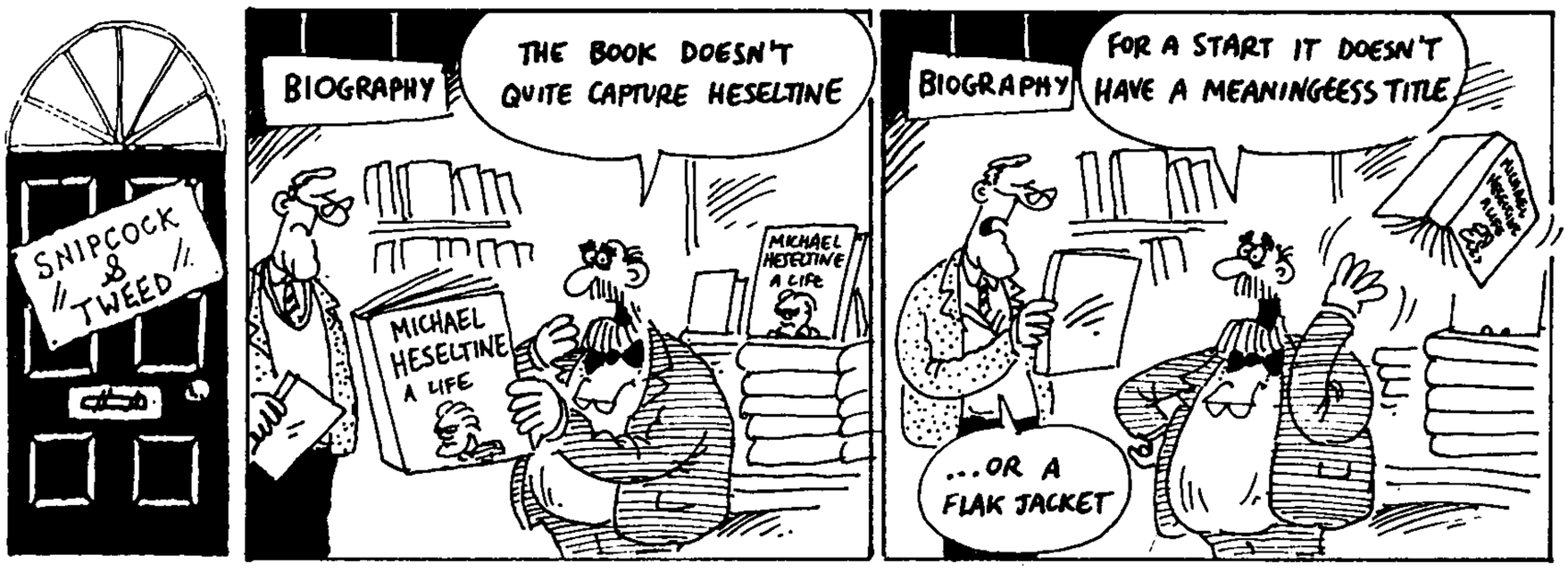
Penguin is meanwhile making 19 more individuals redundant.

■ MR Christopher Sinclair-Stevenson, founder of the sometime eponymous imprint, has been pronouncing to anyone who will listen that Bookworm got it wrong a fortnight ago in saying that Random House paid £15m for Reed Books.

He insists it was £14m. But this has now been reduced to £13m as Simon Master, deputy chairman of Random House, continues his due diligence investigations. He has discovered that Reed didn't have "full-term" licences for many of the authors who do best in paperback, and thus they could lose these authors in a few years' time.

Still, will Reed Elsevier's shareholders be happy that a division which a year or two ago was supposed to be worth £60m or £70m is now considered to be worth £13m, or £12m, or £11m, or...?

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
BIOGRAPHY
THE BOOK DOESN'T QUITE CAPTURE HESELTINE
MICHAEL HESELTINE A LIFE
MICHAEL HESELTINE A LIFE
BIOGRAPHY
FOR A START IT DOESN'T HAVE A MEANINGEESS TITLE
...OR A FLAK JACKET

footnotes

WHAT A MORAN!

THE attitude of the North Wales police to the Waterhouse inquiry into child abuse quickly became clear from the opening statement of their barrister, Andrew Moran QC. The police, he explained, had behaved impeccably from first to last. The only real problems had been created by irresponsible journalists and councillors.

Under cover of the privilege afforded him by the tribunal, Mr Moran named his chief culprit: Mrs Alison Taylor. Mrs Taylor was the first person working in North Wales children's homes to take evidence of child abuse to the police. She played an important role over the next 10 years in finally bringing the allegations to a public inquiry.

ANDREW MORAN QC

When the Waterhouse tribunal opened, she asked for legal representation. This was refused. Everyone else who was likely to be criticised by the tribunal was granted representation and anonymity. Alison Taylor had neither. Mr Moran attacked her again and again by name. His theme was that Mrs Taylor had stirred up muck where none existed. To prove this unlikely proposition, Mr Moran economised with the facts.

1 Moran scoffed that when Alison Taylor made her original complaints, she "was not herself a witness to any assault". Wrong. She had provided eye-witness evidence to one assault, and substantial documentary proof of another.

2 Moran alleged that a young woman who had been in care at a home in Bangor had been "prevailed upon by Alison Taylor" to tell police of four assaults on children in the home. Wrong. The young woman went to the police of her own free will, and Alison Taylor did not even know about this for two and a half years.

3 Moran sneered that Mrs Taylor "had been dismissed from her employment". Somehow he forgot to mention that she had sued for unfair dismissal and that her case was so strong that her employers backed down completely, retracted the dismissal and paid substantial compensation. After being dismissed, Moran alleged, Mrs Taylor had "embarked upon a campaign against Gwynedd social services and its employees". Wrong. She wrote to everyone she could think of, including two prime ministers, in an attempt to get someone in authority to do something about what she regarded as widespread child abuse in her area. Her target was not the council social services — but the complacency she met everywhere.

4 Moran alleged that Mrs Taylor was a self-promoting media freak. He said she "sought to interest Yorkshire Television" and "succeeded in developing the interest of HTV". Wrong. In both cases the TV stations approached her first. She is not at all ashamed that she helped with the HTV programme. She had given all her information to the authorities, including the police, and strongly believed that not enough was done about it.

NO GAGS ON ME: *Alison Taylor, receiving a freedom of information award from Steven Norris MP on 12 February. The citation said she "was dismissed for trying to expose child abuse in North Wales, and refused to accept a financial settlement containing a gagging clause".*

5 Moran alleged that Mrs Taylor had deliberately withheld an allegation made to her by a boy in care. Wrong. The boy never made that allegation.

When Alison Taylor, who is now a successful novelist, read Moran's opening statement, she could hardly believe it. She complained to the tribunal, who at once agreed to fund legal representation for her at the inquiry. She has plenty of other evidence that she is being smeared by the powerful group of people in the area who pretend that all child carers in North Wales are innocent of any abuse.

BAHRAIN BARGAINS

■ A BIG delegation from the dictatorship in Bahrain came to Britain and shacked up at the Dorchester Hotel for a luxurious 10 days earlier this month.

It was led by the son of the amir, the Crown Prince, His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, and his brother, the head of the newly-formed National Guard, Sheikh Mohammad bin Isa al-Khalifa. The Bahraini foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammad Mubarak Al-Khalifa, a cousin of the amir, was there, as was also the deputy chief of the general staff, Sheikh Rashid Abdullah Ahmad al-Khalifa. The purpose of the visit was to buy arms for the National Guard in order more effectively to "control" the vast majority of the Bahrain population who want to elect their government.

Salivating at the prospect of some really juicy arms sales, ministers queued up to grovel to the crown prince and his cousins. Jeremy Hanley from the foreign office, and Michael Portillo and Nicholas Soames from the ministry of defence, all had long and cordial meetings with the dictators, who entertained a clutch of friendly MPs to a sumptuous lunch at the Berkeley on 12 February.

Among those most anxious to impress the party was David Mellor, Tory MP for Putney, who also advises four major arms companies. Mellor was active in securing contracts for these companies in their recent £500m deal with Qatar, which has a long-running dispute with Bahrain. As the former minister of state for defence and for trade Alan Clark used to point out, the great advantage of Arabs quarrelling with one another is that British firms can sell more arms to both sides.

Shares to you, Mr Robinson

■ ALL who love Granada will be delighted to know that its chairman, former caterer Gerry Robinson, has solved his personal financial problems — for the moment, anyway.

GRANADA'S GERRY: *Chairman Robinson*

On 10 February he flogged £457,000-worth of his enormous shareholding in the company. This makes it easier for him to make ends meet, as he only earns £370,000 a year on a two year rolling contract. Happily, he still has a few share options left — about £8m worth.

Robinson doesn't lie awake at nights fretting about too much regulation or supervision by non-executive directors on the Granada board or by auditors.

Michael Orr has just been elected as an independent director whose job is to keep an independent eye on the rest of the board. Mr Orr is a director of Lazards, Granada's financial advisers.

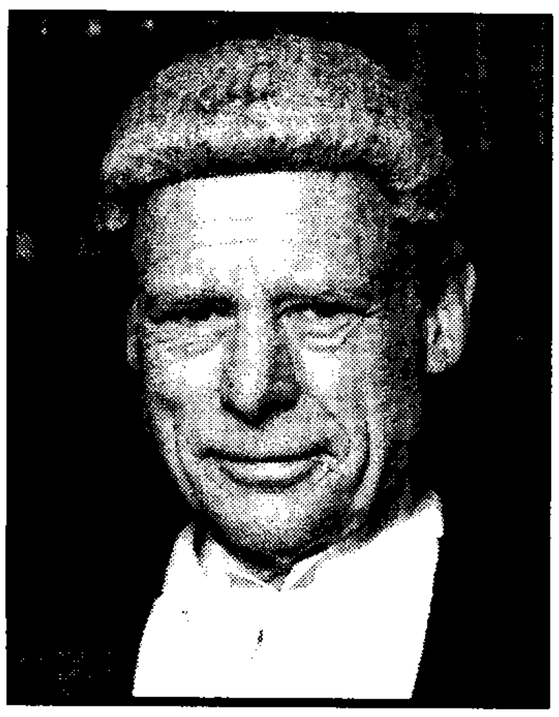
Granada's auditors are KPMG, which got £600,000 last year for auditing the Granada accounts — plus another £1.5m for something or other the Granada annual report doesn't bother to specify. The great advantage of shelling out money to your auditors for work other than auditing is that they know on which side their bread is buttered, and, when it comes to the audit, don't waste their time in petty nit-picking.

FRENCH FARCE

DEVOTEES of Peter Cook's historic mauling of the summing up of Mr Justice Cantley in the 1979 trial of Jeremy Thorpe would have enjoyed themselves in the high court on 5 and 6 February when Mr Justice French was summing up in the libel action between five Metropolitan police officers and the *Guardian*.

The officers, backed by the bottomless coffers of the Police Federation and the legendary brilliance of the federation's lawyers, Russell Jones and Walker, had sued the *Guardian* for an article which stated, correctly, that eight officers had been transferred out of Stoke Newington police station in north London after allegations had been made against large numbers of policemen. The five officers, who were not named in the article, claimed they had effectively been denounced as guilty of the offences. The *Guardian* insisted that it had printed information which was accurate, much of which came from police sources.

Mr Justice French seemed older than his 71 years. He appeared to be ill, and the case was often adjourned before the working day was over. He was also consistently and absurdly partial to the plaintiffs. The *Guardian* was not allowed to refer to anything which had happened after the *article* was written. It was not allowed, for instance, to tell the jury how many Stoke Newington officers had eventually been charged — nor even that when the charges were finally brought the paper had stated clearly that all other officers, including the five plaintiffs, had been cleared. On the other hand the officers *were* allowed to tell the jury that some years after the article they had been cleared. Alan Rusbridger, editor of the *Guardian*, could not even get into the witness box. Nor could another newspaper editor who had volunteered to speak for the defendants, Max Hastings, of the *Evening Standard*.



***MR JUSTICE FRENCH** (or not as the case may be)*

The judge's summing up started off rather badly when he referred to "these three plaintiffs". Er, there were actually five plaintiffs, all of whom were in court. The judge then embarked on what he called "a brief review of the witnesses". This went on for 12 pages of the transcript. The only witnesses "reviewed" were the police officers, who were treated by the judge with loving tenderness. The judge reminded the jury of the officers' brave and sterling service in Stoke Newington; their dedication to the police; their shock and dismay (and that of their families and girlfriends) when they read the *Guardian* article. He stressed one officer's "success at rugby football". That officer, he reminded the jury, had said that reading the *Guardian* article was the worst experience of his life apart from getting divorced and his mother's death.

The *Guardian* and its lawyers wondered when their evidence was going to be reviewed. It wasn't. The judge reminded the jury that the author of the article, Duncan Campbell, had estimated the readership of the *Guardian* at one million. That was the only reference in the whole summing up to Campbell who had spent a day in the witness box vigorously justifying his paper's right to publish accurate information. Campbell was supported by two very senior former police officers, former Deputy Assistant Commissioner Michael Taylor and Supt Ian Russell, who had led the inquiry into Stoke Newington police. Both stressed the accuracy of the *Guardian* article and neither was even mentioned by Mr Justice French.

At the start of the second day, George Carman QC, for the *Guardian*, objected to the cavalier treatment of the *Guardian* evidence. The judge called the jury back and said, at once: "Mr Carman has abandoned his plea of justification of the words complained of except in the very limited sense which I have reminded you of yesterday." There was an embarrassed shuffling in court. When the judge finally stumbled to the end of his summing up and asked the jury to retire to consider their verdicts, George Carman rose again.

"Before that is done," he said, "I bring to your lordship's attention the fact that you started off this morning by telling the jury that I had abandoned some part of the plea of justification. That simply is not so, with respect. The plea of justification that the *Guardian* had advanced in this court has been the same from first to last."

The judge replied: "If I said that, Mr Carman I was wrong and you have put me right, for which I am grateful."

The jury went out and came back the next day with a verdict for the defendants.

Anyone faced in future by the horror of a libel action can only hope that Mr Justice French's lamentable performance was his last and that he will swiftly announce his overdue, if well-earned, retirement.

***THE PRIORS:** Lady and Lord, both on the board*

PRIOR TUCK

■ **THE public humiliation in front of his shareholders last year of former Tory cabinet minister Lord Prior, the GEC chairman, has been distressingly extended to his wife, Jane.**

Last autumn the *Eye* commented on a public challenge to Lord Prior at GEC's annual general meeting by a demure representative of PIRC, the corporate governance watchdog. Lord Prior was asked out loud why there was no vote on GEC annual accounts. The florid lord, who spent so much of his time in government lecturing trades unions on the need for more democracy, went brighter red than ever and stammered that GEC's policy for generations had been to avoid shareholders' votes on accounts.

Last month PIRC recommended that shareholders in the sugar giant Tate & Lyle vote against the reelection as a director of Lady Prior. The chief reason is that she has been there too long — more than 10 years — and so can no longer be considered independent. But PIRC was also worried about Lady Prior's connections to the Tory party, especially as another non-executive director seeking reelection to the Tate & Lyle board was Lord Walker, former cabinet colleague of her husband.

Naturally shareholders overwhelmingly rejected this impertinence and Lady Prior and Lord Walker were triumphantly reelected.

COPS AND COPPERS

■ **FASCIST thugs are in the news — and not just in south London.**

Three years ago a series of horrific and random racist attacks against Sikhs in Gravesend, Kent, led to a local campaign against a gang of racists who were encouraging the attacks.

A leaflet distributed by the Anti-Nazi League, headed GRAVESEND POLICE PROTECT NAZI THUG ORGANISER, set out a long history of official protection of the gang and its leader (for a specially nasty example, see "Grave End" in *Eye* 824).

A policeman who felt "offended" by the leaflet arrested Reg Weston, 79, and Gill Emerson, hauled them off to the police station and dumped them in a cell for eight hours. Months later, a charge under the public order act was thrown out by magistrates before they even heard the defence case. The two campaigners sued the police for battery and false imprisonment. The case has just been settled — with payments by the police of £2,500 to each plaintiff.

Act in the court

■ **DID you know that as a matter of course the prison service train their officers in "role playing" during court appearances? They have just admitted it.**

On 7 February Labour MP Kevin McNamara asked the home office about the cost "of the role playing session held on how to behave in court for those HMP Whitemoor personnel due to give evidence at the trial of the men accused of the 1994 escape".

The answer from Richard Tilt, head of the prison service, was that this "training was part of a normal local programme and no additional costs were incurred".

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

WHO is the anonymous but well-known City figure whose profitable share-dealing activities attracted the attention of first the Stock Exchange insider dealing unit and then the Inland Revenue's former ace investigator Michael Allcock?

His identity was cloaked in court orders during the Allcock trial, although evidence about the allegations received regarding his activities was given by both Allcock and Alan Wilson from the Stock Exchange.

This secrecy was most certainly justified as the disenchanted employee/informant was never able to produce a shred of evidence to corroborate the wild and ridiculous claims he was making of massive share purchases ahead of a giant takeover bid that failed.

It also ensures that this legendary *Private Eye* fan should not face needless embarrassment and distraction over unfounded and untrue allegations from years ago.

IT was the Labour government of Jim Callaghan that fell for the £70m three-card trick perpetrated by scams-on-wheels conman John De Lorean back in 1978. Almost 20 years later it could be a Labour government under Tony Blair that will have to decide whether to close the book on one of the greatest wastes of public money ever.

That is the impact of last week's decision by a federal judge in New York to throw out after 12 years the British government's £150m compensation claim against accountant Arthur Andersen over its audit of the De Lorean Motor Cars venture in Belfast.

Judge Mukasey has told HMG to file a slimmed down claim in the New York State court. While that does not necessarily reduce the size of the claim or any possible damage award, it does mean another year is likely to go by before the case gets into court. And that means more legal expense and perhaps added uncertainty as to how sympathetic a new judge and a local New York jury may be to a claim from a foreign government against an American defendant over events long ago in another country. Given New York's large Irish community, any claim which bears the imprint of the Northern Ireland office may not start out ahead even if the project was designed to create 2,000 jobs mostly for Catholics.

Only the treasury knows how much the legal battle has cost so far, but the best estimate is probably at least $1m a year. What now has to be decided is whether to continue to pour money into the lawyers' pockets or look for a deal.

Fresh from this latest victory Arthur Andersen is unlikely to be generous in making any offer. However, the British partners are at least eager to remove themselves from a Whitehall blacklist which has prevented them obtaining audit work, although Andersen has collected more than £100m from government consultancy contracts.

Given that, unlike in Britain, the winner in US cases still picks up his own legal tab, it would be difficult after all this time for HMG to go for a deal which produces less than it has spent on legal fees. That would only rub more salt in the De Lorean wound. But some time soon an unpleasant decision may have to be made.

Although always playing a hardball game, the suspicion is that Arthur Andersen would rather settle than go to trial if HMG does not walk away. There is ample evidence to embarrass both sides over how they failed to spot De Lorean as a conman and, with Lotus founder Colin Chapman, a fraudster who siphoned off some $8m each into Switzerland.

A decision has to be taken shortly whether to appeal against the Mukasey ruling; but once the election is over the more brutal decision about whether to continue to pursue the case to trial will arise for the new (and presumably) Labour government. Further proof that what goes around comes around.

FAR too little attention in the Peter Young saga has been paid to his dealings with the Swedish broker D. Carnegie, the firm that was instrumental in at least two questionable deals done by "Polaroid" for Morgan Grenfell's European Growth Trust.

Its London office received more than 10 percent of the £710,000 commissions Young generated in the year before the bomb went off last September. And like at fellow Young favourite Fiba Nordic Securities, there was also a personal deal finder at Carnegie. This would seem to have been Bo Haglund, now at American biotech company Oxigene in which Young invested at least £6.2m of clients' money.

Carnegie provided the bridge for Young in deals with the highly speculative Xavier Corporation and Isleinvest. Young loaned money to Carnegie, which promptly loaned it on to the two companies, which in turn gave options on shares to Young's private Luxembourg pot of gold, Russ Oil & Technology. Those options had to be taken up by Young in order for Carnegie and then Morgan Grenfell to be repaid. Carnegie therefore knew more than most about the deals' true nature which was hidden from Morgan Grenfell. The merchant bank did not know of Russ Oil; or of the extent of the stakes in Xavier, a Siberian oil play; nor about Isleinvest, a Hawaiian property developer which developed an appetite, fed by Carnegie/Morgan Grenfell money, for Young's all-time favourite gamble, Solv-Ex.

In return Young was nothing if not generous to Carnegie when it came to backing Oxigene. By the time of his departure he had acquired more than 9 percent of the company — almost 700,000 shares. Some 459,000 of these, costing £6.3m, were in the European Growth Trust. It is not clear where the remaining near 250,000 are to be found. Such backing was more than helpful for Carnegie, which had underwritten a series of issues for Oxigene since 1993 during which the shares had performed well.

Waterstone, who has the backing of the vulture capitalists, has applied for permission to sell
Daily Telegraph

A month before Young was exposed, Haglund left his post as boss of Carnegie's London office to become chief financial officer for Oxigene. Doubtless, as with Fiba and Erik Langaker, Carnegie and Haglund were totally unaware of Young's deception and assumed all his deals were known and approved by Morgan Grenfell.

JURIES, as we all know, have an endless capacity to surprise. Even so it is remarkable to hear suggestions, reportedly from one of the Maxwell trial jurors, that not only did they believe Kevin and Ian were innocent but that Cap'n Bob was too! *Shurely shome mistake*?

BY falling on his sword in Tokyo, Sumitomo's Yasuo Hamanaka may well ensure that his little helpers in London and New York will escape a similar court room date over Sumitomo's $2bn-plus losses on the copper market.

For having obtained a guilty plea to fraud, Japanese prosecutors now have no need for cooperation from the inquiries mounted by the Serious Farce Office or the US Attorney in New York. Indeed, so far they have not sought any assistance, which suggests they may not be over-enthusiastic about assisting any British or American prosecutions, especially if this might expose the party line that Hamanaka did it all himself.

All of which must bring a sigh of relief in Monte Carlo, where Hamanaka's former brokers Charlie Vincent and Ashley Levett, of Winchester Commodities, will soon celebrate a year of tax exile. They may be further reassured by news that the SFO's investigation is under the control of none other than Fred Coford, hero of the Roger Levitt fiasco. No wonder there was confusion and embarrassment over the too wide-ranging search warrants served on accountant Jeffery Green which required the face-saving intervention of the judges and a tactical retreat by the SFO.

IT SEEMS Lord Hanson, for reasons that are not immediately apparent, was greatly upset by the mischievous suggestion in *Eye* 916 that there was some link, which of course there is not, between his chosen successor Derek Bonham and the soon to be ex-Tory MP Sir Nicholas Scott. As we and the noble lord know, their behaviour in public could not be more different.

'Slicker'

EDUCATION NEWS

MONITORING Education Lecturing Services (ELS), which supplies part-time lecturers to colleges thus enabling the colleges to dodge changes in the law that give part-timers the same rights as full-timers, may prove complicated for the national audit office (NAO).

Often colleges simply hand their current part-timers to ELS, which leads to the bizarre situation of colleges being asked for references for teachers they have already recruited and being charged a minimum of £6,000 a year for the privilege.

ELS's chief executive is Geoffrey Lennox, who is also chief executive of North Derbyshire TEC. He is a businessman and a director of numerous other companies, including Protocol National, a software outfit set up in 1996. Protocol National is the parent company of ELS and is, in turn, owned by yet another company formed at the same time called ELS Group, which has Lennox on the board.

The largest shareholding in the ELS Group of 434,000 preference shares and 40,735 ordinary shares, dwarfing the others, is held by Fenchurch Ltd. Unfortunately as Fenchurch is a nominee company which conceals the true ownership of the shares, the result is that the ultimate beneficiary of an estimated £600,000 of public money remains anonymous. Plenty of work for the auditors at the NAO.

SIGNAL FAILURES

STAGECOACH is the firm responsible for sacking 70 drivers and then cancelling 200 services a week — result, chaos and misery on South West Trains. Now this hero of privatisation is going to be allowed to get its talons into rival National Express (see *Eye* 905).

Experts in the train industry say that National Express is facing an uphill struggle trying to honour its promise of new trains on its Gatwick Express and Midland mainline franchises by April 1999. According to *Modern Railways* magazine, the likely delay will mean extending the leases on the existing rolling stock, owned by the Porterbrook leasing company, until the new trains are ready.

"About the only firm which will be laughing all the way to the bank is Porterbrook, which will be charging an arm and a leg to extend the lease of the existing trains." If this happens, the monopolies and mergers commission (MMC) will presumably be of little help to National Express. After all, it was the MMC which brushed aside warnings of potential conflicts of interest and recently allowed Porterbrook to be sold to, er, Stagecoach.

DISTURBING evidence of a possible radio "blackspot" has emerged after a brick was thrown through a train window outside Leeds.

When a passenger was hit by flying glass on 6 February, the train crew tried to radio for an ambulance only to find that they could not get through to base. Worried rail workers believe the incident could point to a dangerous radio blackspot — at Butcher Hill at Horsforth — suggesting that information on derailments may not be able to get through to other trains hurtling towards potential disaster.

Another radio blackspot has been blamed for the death of a train conductor on the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle line, when an unsuspecting train ploughed into him as he was ushering passengers to safety following a derailment. Rail workers have called for investment in high-tech equipment to get around the problem. But such life-saving measures seem to have low priority on the modern railway.

'Dr B. Ching'

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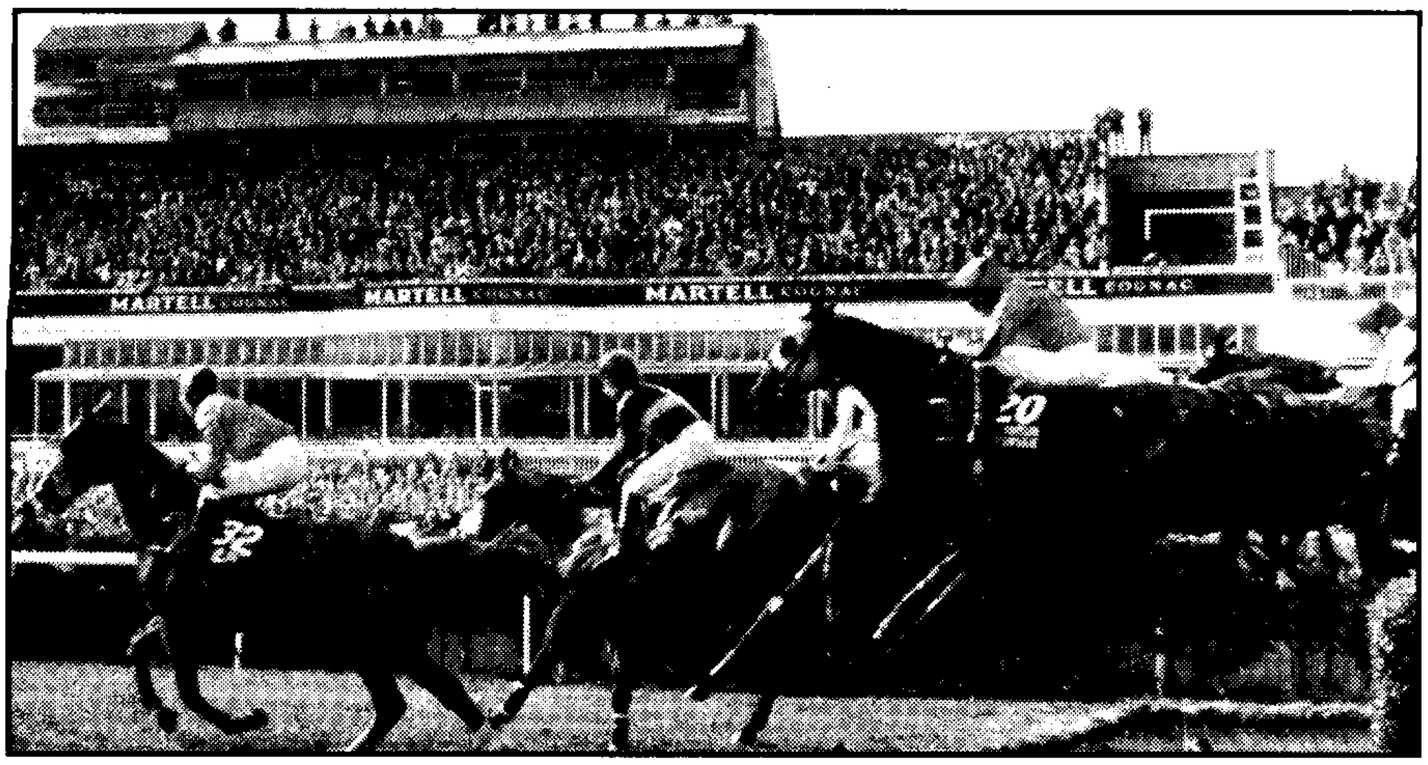

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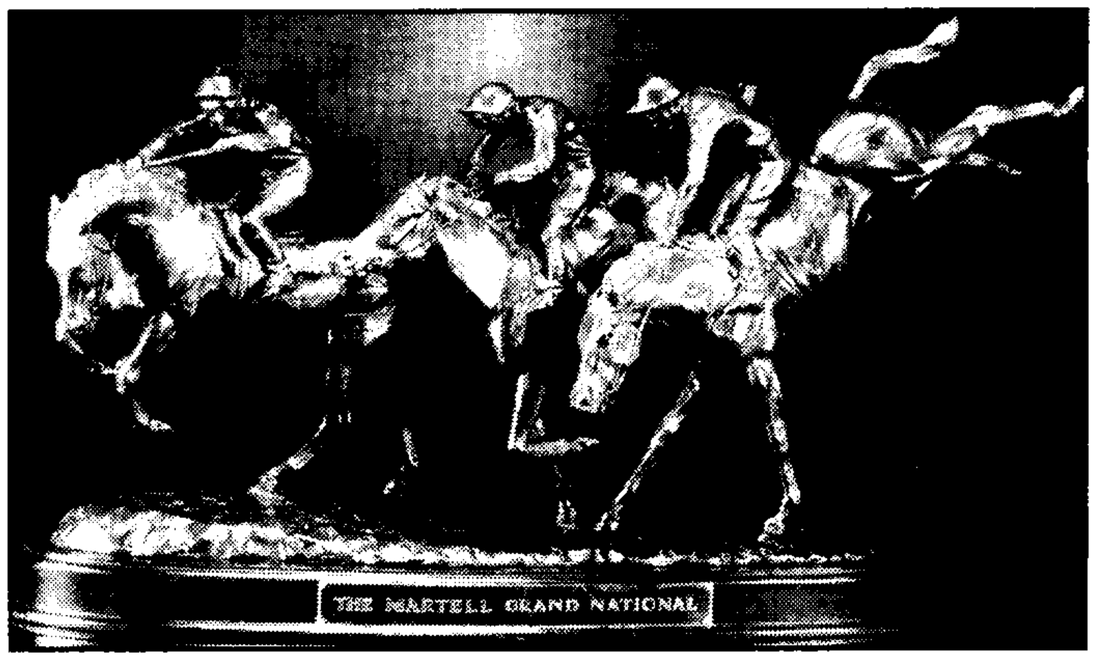

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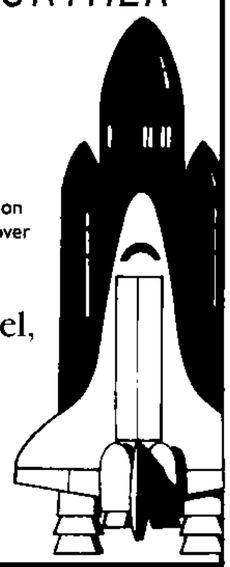

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CUCKOLDED ACADEMIC, 56, E.Mids, easygoing, seeks honest loving playful n/s hen for long-term nesting anywhere. Box 0618.

PRETTY WOMAN, 28, seeks tall, humorous, funny, professional male for romantic, love affair. London/Home Counties. Box 0718.

WOMEN ON TOP — submissive male seeks strict female. Box 1018.

VIRGIN, MALE, 21, over ripe cherry in need of harvest. Ideal for mutual ego boost. London. Box 0810.

ASSERTIVE MAN, attractive, educated, 46 professional status, comfortable lifestyle. Strict but caring, demanding but rewarding. You are feminine, attractive, intelligent, with genuine desire to explore your submissive nature. London/Southeast. Box 0918.

CAVORTING IN CANTON — expenses paid trip for best letter from uninhibited lady. Box 1118.

TREVOR (42) awaits Celia for briefs encounter. Thames Valley. Box 1318.

TALL, SLIM BLONDE — bright, bored Devon woman needs TLC. Box 2118.

PEAK DISTRICT DOCTOR — 30's, seeks intelligent intrepid female company for mountain biking trips and motor bike outings England/Continent. Photo please. Box 2818.

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SLENDER, ATTRACTIVE, sensuous, erudite, separated woman, 38, seeks similar tall military? man. Box 1518.

EASTEUROPEAN MALE, 32/168, London, "labelled" always and EVERYWHERE, wltm female with same experiences. Box 1718.

DO YOU GIVE good head? Barking brain surgeon (32) seeks brainless bimbo for sinister experiments. London. Box 2018.

MALE, MID-50s, mutually separated, Midlands (South), retired, affluent, interested in theatre, cinema, dining out, sport (watching), current affairs, wltm attractive, intelligent lady for socialising, possibly more. Photo and letter secures reply. Box 1818.

OPEN MARRIAGE? Graduate male, 51, attractive, caring, romantic seeks female for open relationship. Manchester/anywhere. Box 1918.

MALE WANTED by attractive, tall, unpretentious young lady. Notts/Yorks. Box 1218.

MILLIONAIRE SEEKS trophy girl for champagne dinners, five star hotels, exotic travel. No ties. No baggage. Just good fun. London. Box 2318.

TALL, HANDSOME, married man wltm slim, attractive, married lady 35+ for discreet affair. Yorkshire area ono. Box 1817.

TALL AMUSING attractive sensuous and very successful man Bath/London 40 seeks a younger woman for discreet champagne cuddles and passionate pampering. If you would like some fun frolics and friendship please write with your telephone number to Box 3016.

TWIXT BIMBO and bus-pass. Mildly intellectual, socially under-exploited, married, male entrepreneur, 55, seeks mature, lively female to amuse and entertain. North/Central London. Box 1618.

HANDSOME, NICE GUY bachelor, 39, (bit of a playboy), caring, generous, country-loving and sincere, seeks beautiful, intelligent, career-type girl younger than him, with long (silky) hair, long (slender) legs and long (red) nails, for friendship, fun and romance: Air hostess/hotel/media girl perhaps? West Midlands/anywhere: Good letter & photo guarantees reply. Box 2518.

INDEPENDENT MARRIED lady (50s) — lonely due to husband's lifestyle, seeks gentleman friend 60+ for social outings, E. Anglia/London. Box 2618.

FUN-LOVING, BLONDE, green eyed, 34 year old, graduate looking for a '90s man wanting to share laughter, romance and hopefully the future. Box 2718.

TRAVELLING COMPANION — attractive aussie/kiwi male (28-35), vgsoh, out-going for female (33) for "Down Under" experience — Dec '97 (10-12 weeks). Photo required. Box 4317.

HANDSOME AFFLUENT married airline pilot seeks naughty lady for champagne affair — photo/phone appreciated. Box 1317.

OFFBEAT MANAGING director seeks bright girlfriend to mix business with pleasure. 0171 792 8825 or Box 3706.

OFFBEAT ARTISTIC strict graduate male (40, 6'3") seeks fun loving adventurous lady (London/Home Counties). Box 3116.

ATTRACTIVE, INDEPENDENT, professional woman, sings jazz in the bath. WLTM witty, successful man, 25-40 to enjoy pleasures old and new. Box 2418.

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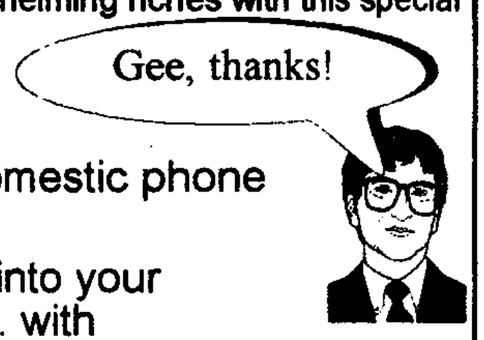

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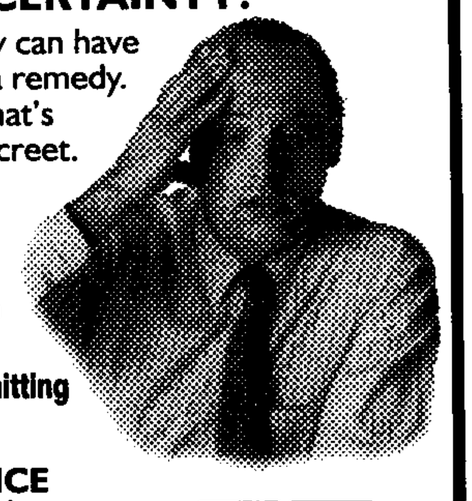

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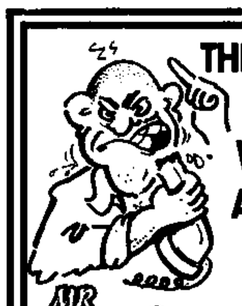

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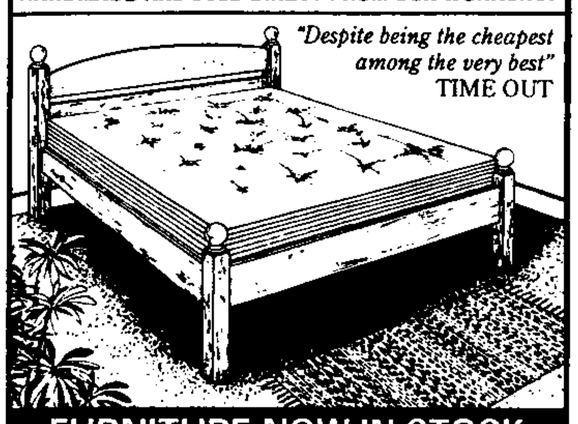

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2. Personal Information

Marital Status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒
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Age:_____ Height:_____
Occupation:_____
Religion:_____
Build: slight ❒ medium ❒ large ❒
Attractiveness:
Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

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Comprehensive ❒
Secondary Modern ❒

O Levels / GCSE's ❒ A levels ❒
Further Education ❒
University / Professional Equivalent ❒
Technical Qualification ❒

4. Your Personality

(tick which traits closely describe you)

❒ Affectionate ❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious ❒ Practical
❒ Considerate ❒ Conventional
❒ Shy ❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic ❒ Adventurous

5. Your Attitudes

(tick for yes, cross for no or leave blank if you don't feel strongly)

❒ Do you prefer town life?
❒ Do you involve yourself with community activities?
❒ Do you have many friends of your own sex?
❒ Are you interested in current affairs?
❒ Are you looking for one special relationship?
❒ Do you like team activities?
❒ Does your work make it difficult to meet new people?
❒ Do you feel resentful when forced to act quickly?
❒ Do you want to extend your social life as well as finding a special relationship?
❒ Do you devote a lot of time to your social life?

6. Your interests

(sections 6. and 7. Please tick for a liking, cross for a dislike or leave blank for no pref.)

❒ Wining/Dining ❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs ❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit ❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Entertaining ❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading ❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling ❒ Mixing with friends
❒ Walking ❒ Children
❒ Cinema ❒ D.I.Y. / Crafts
❒ Pets/Animals ❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music ❒ Sightseeing

7. Details of the partner you would like:

Minimum age:_____ Maximum age:_____
Height: min._____ max._____ Don't mind ❒
Marital status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒
Widowed ❒ Separated ❒
Don't mind ❒
Build: slight ❒ medium ❒ large ❒
Attractiveness:
Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

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Please answer the questions above, cut out this page and send it to us at Dateline 23 Abingdon Road, London W8 6AL *or call us now on (01869) 324 100*

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